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THE TIMES

50P

No. 65,832

SATURDAY MARCH 8 1997

TODAY

SPRING FEVER
32 pages of romantic looks in the
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FUNNY MONEY
How Comic Relief earns its TV keep
PLUS: 7-day programme guide in
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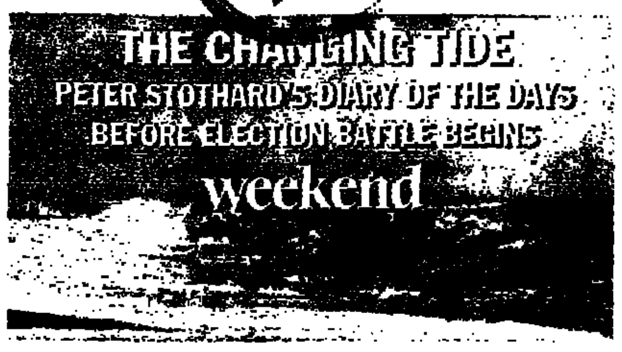
THE CHANGING TIDE
PETER STOTHARD'S DIARY OF THE DAYS BEFORE ELECTION BATTLE BEGINS
weekend

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL
The rise and rise of the micro motor
in CAR 97

MONDAY
THE TIMES FOR ONLY 10P EVERY MONDAY

Helplines set up for mothers

Alert for 1,700 women over HIV doctor

By Jeremy Laurance and Stephen Farrell

MORE than 1,700 women were offered HIV tests yesterday after a junior doctor who helped to deliver their babies and carry out hysterectomies was found to be infected with the Aids virus.

The doctor, whose identity and sex has not been revealed, worked at four hospitals in Gloucestershire and Essex between February 1991 and January this year. The doctor told authorities about the infection after discovering it last month.

The records of 50,000 patients were checked and yesterday the health authorities began contacting those who were felt to be at any risk. They are being offered counselling and HIV testing, and helplines have been set up to provide advice.

Medical experts insisted that the chances of any patient being infected were extremely low and there was no risk at all of the virus being transmitted to babies.

The doctor worked at the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital from February 1991 until October 1993; King George Hospital, Redbridge, Essex, from August 1993 until February 1995; Whipps Cross Hospital, Waltham Forest, Essex, from March 1995 until January this year, apart from last March; and at Southend Hospital from March 1996 to October 1996.

Dr Georgia Duckworth, regional epidemiologist for North Thames told a press conference yesterday that the 1,752 women being contacted had undergone Caesareans, major gynaecological surgery or complicated vaginal deliveries involving forceps and stitches.

The case is the second involving an obstetrician this year, and over the past decade more than a dozen British healthcare workers have been found to be infected with HIV. But in no case has the infection been passed to a patient.

Dr Duckworth emphasised the low risk of transmission, pointing out that there had been only two reported instances anywhere in the world of a healthcare worker infecting his patients.

Nevertheless, the Director of the Conservative Family Institute called for compulsory HIV testing for doctors — particularly those from countries where Aids is endemic — while the Patients Association said that the infected doctor should be named.

Dr Adrian Rogers, an Exeter GP, said: "The case for testing is becoming unanswerable. It is becoming an embarrassment for the health service that these scares keep cropping up."

Dr Rogers, who will stand as a Tory candidate in the general election, said that he had written to the Health Secretary last month after the death from Aids of the Nigerian obstetrician Olukayode Fasawe who had worked in three British hospitals. "I know there is reluctance in the profession because of a misplaced sense of political correctness. We should introduce tests for all migrant doctors — the highest risk group."

But the British Medical Association said that would be a misuse of public money. Doctors were at much greater risk of being infected by patients than the other way about. "A negative HIV test could provide a false reassurance because the person tested may have been very recently infected and it can take up to three months to show a positive result. Equally, the person could be exposed to an HIV risk after the test."

The Health Department said that because the overall risk of transmission was very small, routine testing could not be justified.

The Patients Association meanwhile protested that the doctor's identity was being concealed. But NHS managers insisted that maintaining confidentiality was essential to avoid deterring other doctors who may be infected in the future from coming forward.

The hotline for worried patients in London and Essex is 0800 146271 and the one for Gloucestershire patients is 0800 146091. Calls are free.

Dr Stuttaford, page 2

DARREN FLETCHER

Adrian Targett, 42, with a replica of Cheddar Man's skeleton in the Somerset caves. They are linked through the female line of descent.

History teacher bones up on ancestor

By Nigel Hawkes science editor

A HISTORY teacher at a Somerset school discovered yesterday that he had a Stone Age ancestor who lived 9,000 years ago.

Genetic tests on Cheddar Man, a young hunter-gatherer whose well-preserved skeleton was discovered in the Cheddar Caves in 1903, have established a link to Adrian Targett, 42, a teacher at Kings of Wessex Community School in Cheddar.

The remarkable discovery was made after Philip Priestley, a television producer, asked the Institute of Molecular Medicine in Oxford to carry out tests on samples of DNA taken from the skeleton, which is now in the Natural History Museum in London. The results are to be broadcast as part of a series on archaeology in Somerset later this year.

Samples were also taken from children and teachers at schools in the Cheddar area, and from people whose families had been in the area for generations. To the astonishment of the scientists, a close match was found between Cheddar Man and Mr Targett, proving that they are linked through the female line of descent.

Yesterday, after the news was broken to him, Mr Targett said: "I'm absolutely overwhelmed. It is very strange news to receive. I'm not sure how I feel at the moment. I'm just wondering how I can work Cheddar Man into lessons about the rise of the Nazis."

The Oxford team studied mitochondrial DNA, the kind found in parts of the cells used for generating energy. Unlike nuclear DNA, which carries genes from mothers and fathers, mitochondrial DNA is inherited unchanged down the maternal line. It was used, for example, to prove that bones found in a pit in Russia were those of the murdered Romanovs, the Russian royal family.

Mitochondrial DNA is more plentiful and easier to recover from ancient bones

Continued on page 2, col 5

Cheddar Man's skull

Littlewoods halts Freemans talks

Littlewoods, the pools and retailing group, has broken off negotiations to buy the £395 million Freemans mail order business from Sears. The move could start a bidding scramble for Freemans and leaves Littlewoods' own development plans in disarray .... Pages 25, 28

Paedophile jailed

Keith Laverack, 52, a senior social services manager, was jailed for 18 years at Chester Crown Court after 15 sexual assaults against children in care .... Page 3

Penalty kick

Subbuteo, the table-top football game invented at Tunbridge Wells in 1947, is no longer to be made in Britain. 250 jobs will be lost .. Page 25

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Blair pledges food agency as 'consumer's champion'

By Jill Sherman, Polly Newton, Michael Horsnell and Valerie Elliott

TONY BLAIR exploited Cabinet tensions over the food safety scare as he announced last night that if a Labour government were elected it would set up an independent food standards agency.

The Labour leader has appointed Professor Philip James, director of the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen, to ensure that the proposed agency will operate "openly and transparently".

Professor James said that the agency would report to the Department of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, although he suggested that Health might take the lead responsibility.

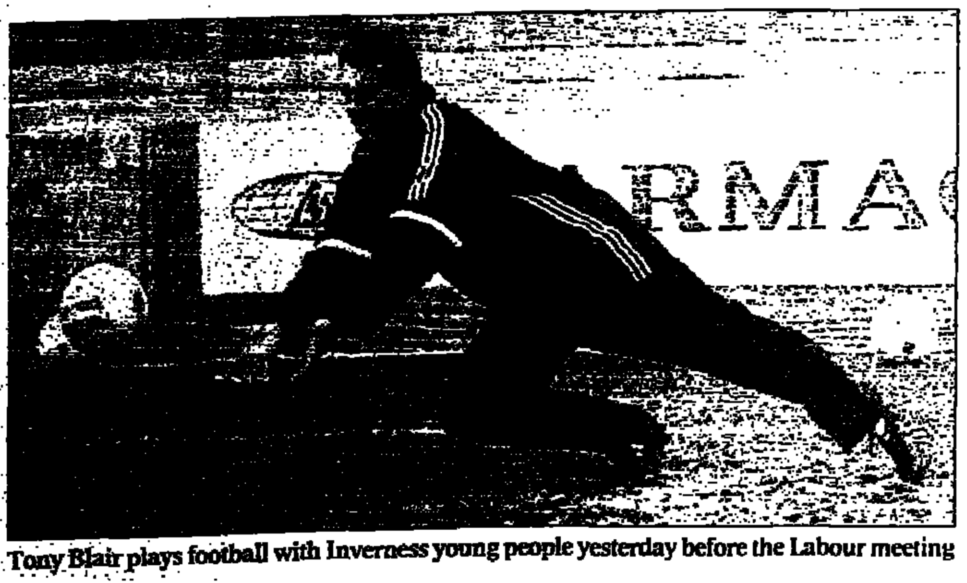
Speaking at the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Inverness, Mr Blair said: "The case is now unanswerable for a powerful food standards agency which sees its task as being the consumer's champion. No more cover-ups."

He said that at present responsibility for food safety was scattered through 43 different quangos in three ministries. "The consumer always comes second. That cannot be allowed to continue."

In the meantime, sniping continued between government departments over the handling of the unpublished report on hygiene in the meat industry. Although John Major said it was "ludicrous" to suggest that Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, was enraged by the Agriculture Ministry's decision not to pass on the report, the two departments continued to make clear that each believed the other to be in the wrong.

Last night it was disclosed that six people have been infected by the E. coli bacterium after eating at a motel in Lincoln. Two women, one of them elderly, were said to be "poorly" in hospital.

Despite the present difficulties, however, it seems clear that the Agriculture Ministry will survive after the election. Senior civil servants argue that Britain needs a separate Ministry to ensure that it keeps its clout in Europe.



Tony Blair plays football with Inverness young people yesterday before the Labour meeting

Judge blames EU ban on caning for juvenile crimes

By Joanna Bale

A JUDGE condemned European Union laws against corporal punishment and the rise in single-parent families as he sent two young arsonists to a secure unit yesterday.

Sentencing the boys, aged ten and 13, to two and a half years, Judge Rodwell QC said in Luton Crown Court that the abolition of corporal punishment in schools had left teachers unable to discipline unruly youngsters, leading to an increase in delinquency.

The boys, who cannot be named for legal reasons, set fire to a neighbour's house as they roamed the streets of a council estate after being expelled from school.

Judge Rodwell said: "With the best intention in the world corporal punishment has been abolished and indeed that is a requirement of the EU.

"But this has resulted in an extremely unsatisfactory situation. Nobody wants children to be flogged but it is no longer possible for a teacher to deal with even a minor incident by a cuff round the ear or a smack on the hand, which is swift and something the child entirely understands and stops minor incidents escalating.

"If the child does not respond to being told not to bring gin into school or beat his mates up the teacher has to go through discipline procedures. If the correct procedures are followed a great deal of verbiage comes out which may satisfy the intelligent niceties of eductionists but has no impact on a great number of children. Suspension is hardly a sanction."

The judge expressed concern over single-parent families, and said that children needed two parents. The boys had both come from broken homes. He said: "Both children come from homes where a father for a lot of the time was not present. It is often said that in single-parent homes children can be given as much love as they need but that is not the entire answer."

During their trial last month the court was told that the two boys were among a gang of children who harassed the Smith family on the Downside estate, Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

One day, the boys put paper through the letter box and tried to set light to it, but failed. Then a woman neighbour, described by the judge as "the neighbour from hell", lent them a lighter so they kicked the door in and started a fire on a hall table.

The blaze left the house uninhabitable, causing £4,000 damage to the building and destroying virtually everything the family owned. The boys denied arson.

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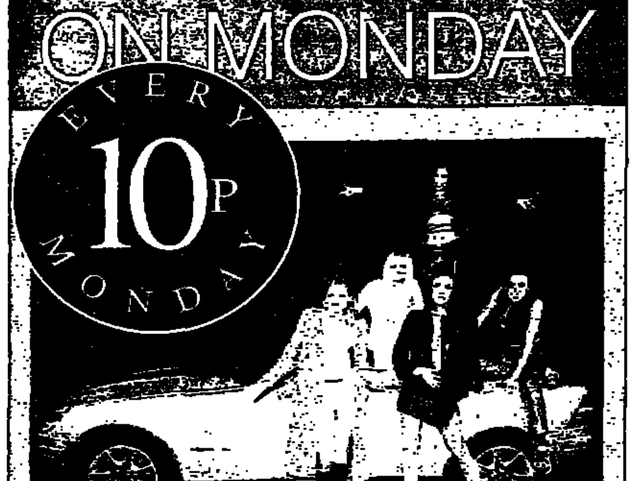
THE TIMES ON MONDAY

EVERY 10P MONDAY



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A SPICE GIRL'S MERCEDES SLX WORTH £36,000

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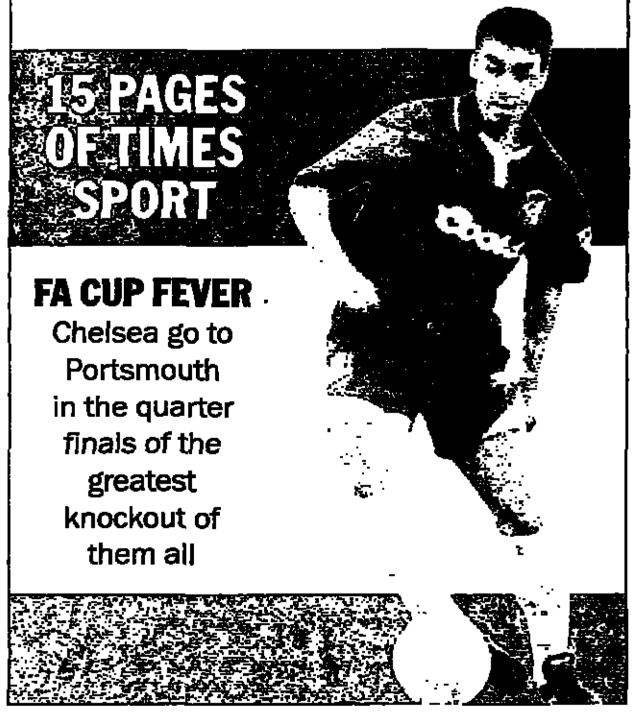
Starting on Monday: your week-long guide to primary education



15 PAGES OF TIMES SPORT

FA CUP FEVER

Chelsea go to Portsmouth in the quarter finals of the greatest knockout of them all

Blair rallies Scottish party for battle ahead

By Jill Sherman

TONY BLAIR yesterday urged critics of his "new Labour" project to trust him to transform the country as he had his own party.

The Labour leader warned his party against complacency, after an opinion poll yesterday showed Labour with a 26 point lead over the Tories. "We are doing well but we take nothing for granted," he told the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Inverness.

Mr Blair argued that Labour could make huge changes in government even within tight spending constraints. "There is nothing that makes me more angry than when people say there's no difference between the parties," he said. Labour would use the same pot of money, but spend it differently — on improving health and education services and on law and order. "The public sector spends £320 billion a year. Dont let anyone tell me we can't spend that money differently."

Scottish party activists are unhappy with Gordon Brown's announcement that, as Chancellor, he would not raise income tax rates and that he would stick to Kenneth Clarke's current overall expenditure figures. The Campaign for Socialism has put out a leaflet accusing Mr Blair of suppressing dissent.

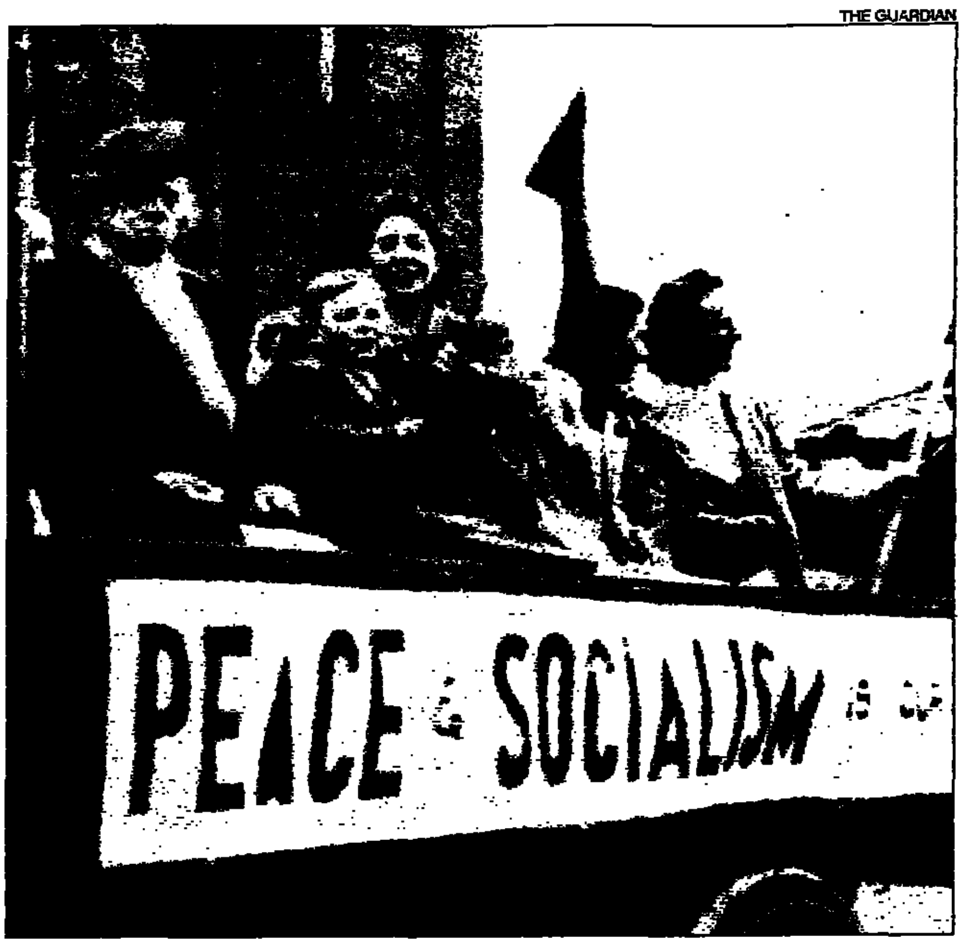
Last night old Labour activists were voted off the party's Scottish executive and replaced by Blairite candidates, giving Mr Blair for the first time a majority of supporters on the committee.

Using probably his last big speech before the general election campaign, Mr Blair said: "We run for office as new Labour. We govern as new Labour. No going back to the past. Not old left or new right but a new centre and centre-left agenda for Britain."

Directing his message to the electorate as well as delegates in the hall, Mr Blair spelt out the central differences between the two parties. He reassured activists that he would campaign for two "yes" votes in the referendum on whether a Scottish parliament, with tax-varying powers, should be established.

"Have faith in new Labour and Britain will have faith in us," he said.

THE GUARDIAN



Mary Blair, left, who fostered Tony Blair's father Leo, on the campaign trail

Socialist birthright was fostered in tenements

By Shirley English

TONY BLAIR'S working-class roots in the slum tenements of 1920s Glasgow were given a new spin yesterday with claims that Mary Blair, his foster grandmother, was a firebrand socialist.

In a move neatly timed to coincide with the start of the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Inverness, Mr Blair's office released sepia photographs of the matriarch standing on a campaign lorry with the slogan: "Peace and Socialism is Our Aim."

Mary Blair and her husband, James, a Clydeside ship rigger who was seldom well enough to work, lived in the upstairs section of a privately let sandstone tenement. Their home consisted of a kitchen and one other room. They had to share their lavatory, which was downstairs, with 11 other people.

In 1925 the Blairs fostered the illegitimate baby boy of Celia Ridgway and Charles Parsons, travelling entertainers. The child was Leo Blair, the Labour leader's father.

In later life Leo Blair had ambitions to stand as a Conservative candidate, but during the 1930s Depression he was a secretary in the Young Communist League.

He left school at 17 and worked for the *Daily Worker* newspaper, but when the Second World War started, it was closed down. He then went to work as a clerk for Glasgow Corporation, during which time he married Hazel McLeay, the daughter of a Glasgow butcher. He joined the Army in 1942, emerged as a major, gained a legal qualification and became a barrister.

In 1969 the local authority began a plan of slum clearance. Tony Blair's grandmother moved into one of the new high-rise blocks. Mr Blair said yesterday that he remembered the move was a "great thing" for her.

He said: "That hope and progress has changed for a great number of people in inner cities and that is what we have to tackle."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Major to announce nursing care scheme

John Major last night ended a week overshadowed by the row over food safety, worsening poll figures and embarrassing remarks by David Evans, MP, by promising to unveil new policies to distance his party from Labour.

Plans to extend private pension provision would be followed by further "original and exciting ideas", he said. Those ideas will include the unveiling on Monday of plans to introduce an insurance scheme to help the elderly pay for nursing care without having to sell their homes. For every £1 of insurance cover, £1.50 worth of assets would be untouched if nursing care was needed. At present, anyone with assets of more than £16,000 must meet the full cost of fees.

Unlawful killing verdict

An inquest jury in Retford, Nottinghamshire, returned a verdict of unlawful killing yesterday on a seriously ill pensioner who was given a lethal dose of a substance used in America to execute prisoners on death row. Karen Bowler, a nurse at Bassetlaw District Hospital in Worksop, gave potassium intravenously to Philip Gregory, 71, instead of orally. She said she believed she had "made a mistake".

Picasso hospital clue

Police investigating the theft of a £700,000 Picasso painting from a London art gallery have made checks on a psychiatric hospital close to where the suspected thief was last seen. The man, who had a sawn-off shotgun, made his getaway from the Lefevre gallery in Mayfair in a taxi after ordering the driver to take him to Wimbledon, southwest London, where he asked to be dropped off near a psychiatric hospital.

Author's stepson jailed

The stepson of the late Alistair Maclean was jailed for two-and-a-half years yesterday for a £1.5 million computer fraud. Arthur Curtis Maclean, 40, whose mother married the thriller writer when Arthur was a child, was described at the Old Bailey as a reckless spendthrift who bounced cheques "left, right and centre". He swindled thousands of computer users and companies.

Campaign wife widowed

A mother who has fought for 10 years to have the case into her son's death reopened discovered her husband's body in the bath at their home in Blackpool. Fred Varma, 54, had multiple knife wounds, but police have ruled out foul play. A motorcyclist was cleared of reckless driving after Dr and Linda Varma's son Christopher, seven, was killed in a road accident in 1987.

High jumper sent down

Stanley Osuide, Britain's fifth-ranked high jumper, was jailed for six months after he admitted smuggling a Nigerian relative through the Channel Tunnel. He should have been competing yesterday in the World Indoor Championship athletics in Paris, Maidstone Crown Court was told. Osuide has spent nearly the equivalent of the sentence in custody on remand, so he will probably be released soon.

'Boss' honours Ingham

Baroness Thatcher yesterday conferred an honorary degree on Sir Bernard Ingham, her press secretary for 11 years, at the University of Buckingham, where she is chancellor. She praised Sir Bernard as a man of integrity, saying: "The greatest thing about holding great office is that you can choose people of ability because they understand what service to a free country means and they serve you loyally."

Rail firms 'cut services'

Privatised train companies have made dozens of illegal cuts in services since taking over BR franchises, a rail lobby group says. Studies by the Railway Development Society of the timetables run by South West Trains and Connex South Central were said to show 75 breaches of agreed service levels. The Office of Passenger Rail Franchising said the firms had promised to put right any breaches.

Erotic first night

An erotic French film banned in Britain since the 1970s for its sadomasochistic content is to receive its first screening in this country even though it does not have the approval of British censors. *Histoire d'O*, about a woman who is sexually abused by masked men, will be shown at the Institut Francais in London on April 26 as part of a festival entitled "66 Years of Eroticism in French Cinema." **Rumpy-pumpy war, page 19**

Rock-a-bye layby

Bedfordshire County Council has agreed to build a temporary layby outside the house of Julie Marshall, 31, so that she can give birth at home next month. When major work began in her street at Kempston, officials at Bedford Hospital said they could not go ahead if there was no space for an ambulance and a midwife's car outside her front door. The layby will be removed after the birth.

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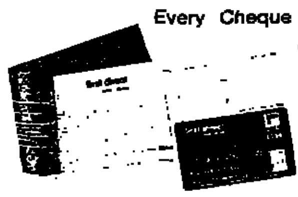

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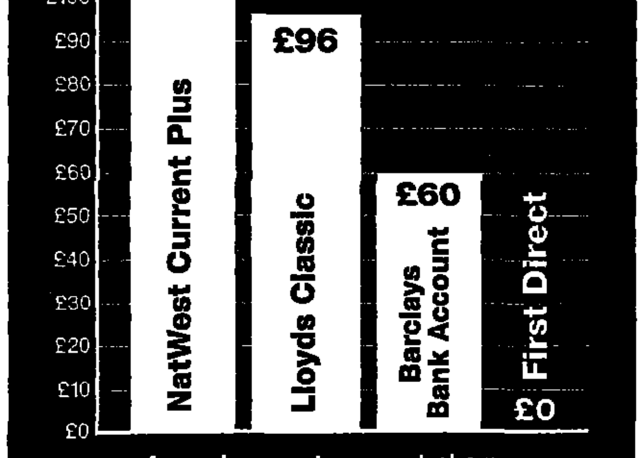

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BC686

Cheddar men

Continued from page 1

than nuclear DNA. Dr Bryan Sykes, from Oxford, said: "It is extraordinary that the DNA survives at all, but we were able to extract it and sequence it. The Cheddar Caves are an excellent place for preservation as the limestone helps keep the minerals in the bone and the DNA intact.

"It is not a perfect match. One base pair — that is, one letter of the genetic alphabet — is different out of 300. But in 9,000 years we would expect one to change by the normal rates of mutation. So it's a pretty close match."

The odds against finding a match are not enormous. The institute carried out only 20 tests, finding a single close match. But given a larger sample, they would probably have found many more. If much of today's large population is descended from the relatively few hunter-gatherers who lived 9,000 years ago, the mitochondrial DNA of a few Earth-mothers will now be shared by many descendants.

Dr Sykes believes it is further evidence that the population of Britain is descended from hunter-gatherers and not from a later group of farmers who migrated to the country. His belief, backed by a much larger study of many different European populations, is that the hunter-gatherers learnt farming from the incoming group, but were not physically displaced by them.

A colleague of Dr Sykes, Dr Robert Hedges, said: "Analysing the bones takes months, as the tests must be run many times to see a reliable pattern. By contrast, analysing the DNA samples from cheek swabs can be done in a few hours."

Mr Targett's wife Catherine, 47, said: "Maybe it explains why he likes his steaks rare."

Doctors must put patients before feelings and submit to HIV tests

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

SOME 50,000 women who have had gynaecological or obstetric care in four health areas would be less than human if they were not worried by the news that a junior doctor who cared for them was HIV positive. Now 1,700 letters are being sent to those patients whose surgery may have put them at risk from the doctor, whose identity and sex have not been revealed.

Fortunately the risk, so far as is known, is not great. It seems that there have been only two suspected incidents of health workers passing HIV to patients: one concerning a French surgeon and, the other, more doubtfully, a Florida dentist. However, the medical establishment and the politicians who have been only too ready to accept its reassurances have been made on more than one occasion in the past 20 years to look foolish; and their foolishness has cost lives.

Originally, for example, medical experts assured the public that there was no evidence that HIV could be spread other than by semen, no evidence that blood could carry the infection, and none that women could catch or transmit it. This statement was answering the wrong question.

The public had wanted to know whether there was evidence that blood and other fluids could transmit the disease. Although there was not, they were falsely reassured. As a result of the doctors' intransigence, maintained despite the forebodings and doubts of many colleagues, hundreds of young haemophiliacs were given blood transfusions and died.

Likewise the reassurance by experts that there was no evidence that BSE could be transmitted from one species to another was ridiculed by many as meaningless and probably inaccurate, but despite this the experts continued with their bland, reassuring phrases and the politicians continued to believe them until they, and everyone else, had proof that BSE was crossing species' barriers.

Hepatitis B, which like HIV is spread by blood, semen and other body fluids, has been spread by doctors and other health workers and there have been several disastrous outbreaks with considerable loss of life. There are many occasions, possibly the majority, when surgeons find after a long operation that the sweat within their gloves is bloodstained as a result of pricks and tears in the gloves.

The same needle prick which allowed a patient's blood to get into a glove might just as well have caused the surgeon to bleed and to allow his or her blood to escape into the patient's wound.

Doctors are compulsorily tested for hepatitis B: why is there such reluctance to do the same for HIV? It seems that there is a fear that it would produce accusations of sexual and racial prejudice, as HIV is still much more common in British homosexuals than heterosexuals, and in those doctors and nurses who have grown up in Africa and the Far East rather than, for example, in York or Truro.

Nobody wants to offend colleagues, and doctors as a group are particularly free of sexual and racial prejudice. But their first duty must be for their patients' health and lives rather than fellow doctors' feelings. The next precaution needed to safeguard the nation's health is to expose the phrase "There is no evidence that this or that can cause trouble" for the feeble reassurance that it is.

11

Teenagers raped and molested during 20-year reign of terror at schools and homes

Paedophile social worker jailed for 18 years

REPORTS BY BRIAN FARMER AND MARK THOMAS

A PAEDOPHILE who repeatedly abused children in his care throughout a 20-year career as a teacher and headmaster at special schools and homes was jailed for 18 years yesterday.

Keith Laverack, 52, molested and raped teenage boys and girls at three establishments in Cheshire and Cambridgeshire, ensuring their silence with a combination of threats and "sweet talk". Judge Huw Daniel told him: "You took advantage of damaged children to satisfy what can only be described as your perverted lusts when you knew that what they wanted was love, affection and security."

Laverack, who rose to become a senior social services manager, denied the 20 specimen charges against him. But the jury found him guilty on 11 counts of buggery and four of indecent assault after almost nine hours of deliberation at Chester Crown Court. He stood with his head bowed in the dock, occasionally closing his eyes as the judge passed sentence. Many of Laverack's victims were in court and they broke into applause as he was led away.

The judge said that Laverack subdued many of his victims by force and violence, leaving them humiliated and oppressed. "They had to live with it for years, locking it away, trying not to think of the appalling things you did to them. You made them go through the ordeal of having to recall what happened to them and suffer what many of them regard as public humiliation. You were merciless to them at the time and you showed no mercy when you were found out."

Judge Daniel went on: "You [assaulted] them at every opportunity that presented itself. You were confident you could get away with it because the system allowed you to get away with it, and you ensured the silence of these children by threats and sweet talk, confident in the knowledge that if these children did complain they would not be believed."

Laverack's career as a paedophile began as soon as he joined the staff of Greystone Heath, an approved school in Warrington, and continued until 1987, the judge said. "Outwardly you were caring and responsible, but you lived a lie. You used your knowledge of children and high intelligence to abuse and deceive. I cannot remember a case as bad as this. That your urges got the better of you I regard as no excuse at all. You knew what you were but you took no steps to have treatment. You wanted to abuse children and you continued to do so over those 20 years or more."

Laverack was convicted of eight out of nine charges of buggery at Greystone Heath School; one charge of buggery at Kneesworth House, a children's home near Meldreth, Cambridgeshire; two out of three charges of indecent assault at Kneesworth House; two out of three charges of buggery while head of Midfield children's home near Cambridge; and two out of three charges of indecent assault at Midfield. He was cleared of indecently assaulting a boy he played against in a golf tournament at Ely, Cambridgeshire.

One of his victims said after the trial: "What the judge said about the gravity of the offences and how wicked they were was pretty much on the ball, and how we all felt — I couldn't put it better. The sentence wasn't lenient but you always hope for more because a paedophile can't be cured and he could be out in nine or ten years and doing it again somewhere else."

Ted Unsworth, director of social services for Cambridgeshire, said: "I regret that anybody has suffered harm as a result of being in care in Cambridgeshire. These offences were committed many years ago when standards were not so high." He also regretted that Laverack had risen so high within the social services department but said there was no way that anyone could have known the truth. "It just shows how clever he was at concealing these activities."

Investigators found network of child abuse

TWELVE paedophiles who preyed on hundreds of vulnerable youths in children's homes across two counties were exposed by one of the biggest ever investigations into child sex abuse yet mounted. Eleven have been given lengthy prison sentences, but the full extent of their network can be revealed for the first time today.

Orders restricting the media from reporting details of several of the cases for fear of prejudicing later trials were finally lifted by a Chester Crown Court judge today as Laverack was jailed.

Police and social workers in Cheshire and Merseyside co-operated to investigate the allegations from former residents of children's homes. They are convinced that similar patterns of widescale abuse by paedophiles who wormed their way into positions of authority at children's homes in the 60s and 70s will emerge from other investigations around the country.

The police inquiry began in Cheshire in August 1993, after complaints were received about Brian Hudson, a residential social worker at Danesford Children's Home, run by NCH Action for Children in Congleton. Officers launched Operation Bugle, which eventually gathered information against 39 former Danesford staff from 1965 to the school's closure in 1991.

Hudson, now 47, was found guilty of four indecent assaults and jailed for four years. Dennis Grain, 64, was jailed for seven years after admitting 19 offences at Danesford, Greystone Heath Approved School in Warrington and Axelholme House in Doncaster.

Grain began his child care work as a residential officer at Ashbourne Lodge, Winchester. He was a housemaster at Danesford in from 1964. He was a housemaster at Greystone Heath from 1971 to 1980 when he went to Doncaster as warden at Axelholme House. He was asked to leave in 1982 for inappropriate behaviour, but from 1983 to 1984 he was warden at Eton College, Windsor.

John Clarke, 37, was another residential social worker at Danesford from 1984 to 1989, when he took a similar job at Redhouse Crescent in Longton, Stoke. He was found guilty of one indecent assault and pleaded guilty to three more, and was also found guilty of one physical assault by Chester Crown Court last year. He is serving 3½ years.

The common link between the investigations in Cheshire and Merseyside was Alan Langshaw, 44, now serving 10 years after admitting 28 sex assaults when he appeared at Warrington Crown Court on November 25, 1994. Langshaw, of Wirral, became a house-parent at Liverpool City Council-run Greystone Heath in 1970, and returned there in 1976 after a two-year break. In 1980 he moved to St Vincent's Community School in Formby, Merseyside as deputy head, and was promoted to headmaster but suspended in 1986. He then worked for Catholic Social Services in Liverpool and the Hydrocephalus Association before joining Halton College, Widnes in 1989 as a counsellor for sexually abused students. He worked there until his arrest on March 7, 1994.

Langshaw's abuse of the disturbed young people who came under his control went undetected for 20 years, until a chance sighting by one of his former victims.

The man saw Langshaw leading a young boy into a St Helens library, his arm protectively wrapped around his shoulder. He went to the police, determined that no more children should have to face what he had endured.

Cheshire police launched Operation Granite in February 1994, concentrating on Greystone Heath, while Merseyside Police set up Operation Van Gogh, initially to investigate Langshaw's activities at St Vincent's.

Operation Granite led to allegations against a total of 33 former Greystone Heath staff who worked there from 1965 until it closed in 1985. Four of the 33, including Langshaw, Laverack, and Grain have been prosecuted and sentenced, while three died before police got involved.

Roy Shuttleworth, 64, of Leigh, Greater Manchester, was found guilty of 11 sex offences at Greystone Heath and Warnerville Children's Home in Liverpool by Chester Crown Court on May 30 last year and jailed for 10 years.

Another major element of the Cheshire inquiry was Operation Emily, which centred on St Aidan's Approved School, Widnes, run by the Nugent Care Society. This operation began with a complaint against headmaster Terence Hoskin in December, 1993.

Allegations about 25 staff were received, covering the years 1970 to 1981, when it closed. Hoskin, 59, of Doncaster, was jailed for eight years for nine sex offences and 13 assaults, all relating to his time at St Aidan's. Residential social worker Colin Dick, now 54, pleaded guilty to seven sex offences and was jailed for four years. A total of 534 allegations — 353 of them sexual — were investigated by the Cheshire team. With further child sex allegations still coming to light, the force is now to set up a permanent paedophile investigation unit.

On Merseyside Operation Van Gogh arrested Edward Stanton, a residential care officer at St Vincent's. He was jailed for 13 years after facing 27 sex charges.

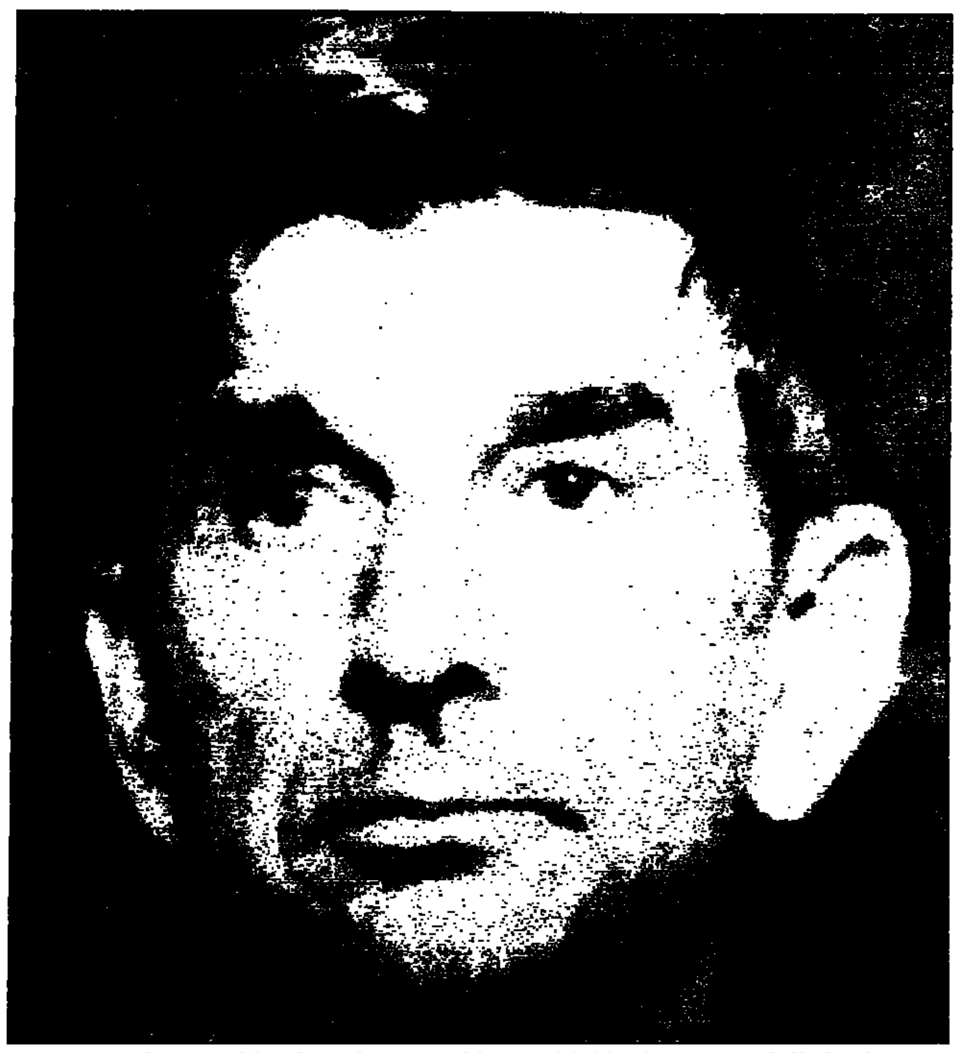
Philip Savage, 43, convicted of 15 sex offences while he worked at Boaler Street Assessment Centre in Kensington, Liverpool and Dyson Hall Assessment Centre in Fazakerley, was jailed for 15 years.

Dyson Hall care worker James Desmond Traynor, 40, from Otterspool, Liverpool, received a 10-year sentence — reduced to eight on appeal — for sex assaults on two teenaged boys. Mark Trotter, who worked as a social worker at the New Heys Assessment Centre in Allerton, Liverpool before moving to Hackney to become a residential social worker died in July 1995 of Aids-related pneumonia, days before police were due to arrest him.

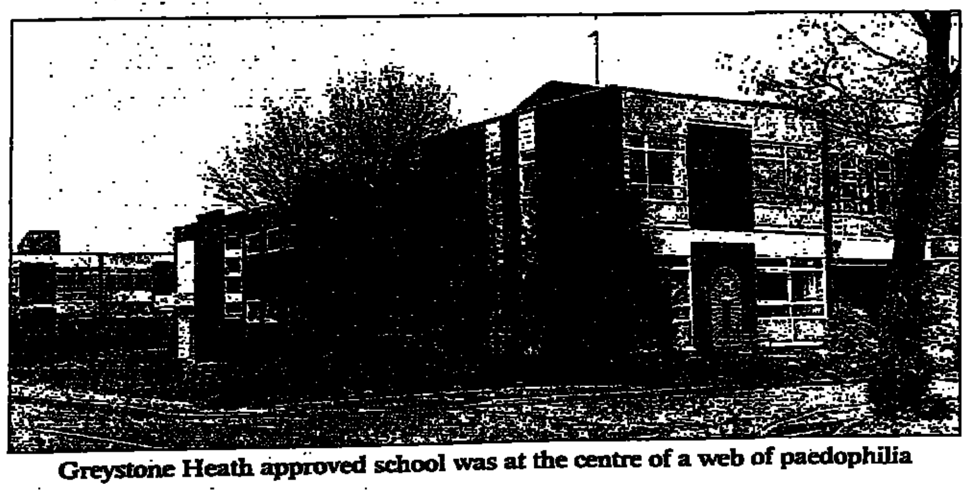
On Merseyside, the flood of further information that came from the Van Gogh prosecutions led to the setting up of Operation Care, in which a team of Wirral-based detectives is even now investigating allegations of abuse at about 17 more homes on Merseyside alone. And even that investigation, large as it is, is just the tip of the iceberg.

THE INQUIRY

A SOLICITOR representing child abuse victims has called for a public inquiry into the scandal in children's homes in northwest England. Peter Garsden said he would be making an appeal to Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary. "We want to know exactly how this could be allowed to happen on such a scale." Mr Garsden estimates there could be hundreds of claims for compensation from victims of convicted child abusers as a result of the police inquiries in the North West and Cambridgeshire. The solicitor, of Abney Garsden McDonald of Poynton, Cheshire, has already prepared the ground for civil actions in the North West.



Laverack was said to have impressed boys with his elegance and distinction



Greystone Heath approved school was at the centre of a web of paedophilia

Captain Hook figure had Lost Boys in thrall

THE PAEDOPHILE

KEITH LAVERACK had risen to a position of great responsibility within Cambridgeshire's social services department before police discovered that he had abused children in his care for the best part of 30 years. He had become manager of the council's guardian *ad litem* panel by the time he was arrested in February last year.

Guardians *ad litem* are independent people appointed by a court to act for children taken into care by social workers and to prepare reports on their futures. Laverack's responsibilities included recruitment and he would almost certainly have had access to the personal details of many children in care.

He began his career as a science teacher at the Greystone Heath approved school in Warrington, Cheshire. He moved to Cambridgeshire in 1970, worked in two children's homes and the planning and procedure department of the county's social services before, in 1992, being appointed manager of the guardian *ad litem* panel. He was well known and well connected.

In court, Alex Carlile, QC, for the prosecution, depicted Laverack as a tall, dashing figure who wore smart clothes, drove sports cars and played golf. Laverack impressed boys with his elegance and distinction, and Mr Carlile compared him to Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*. "The boys for whom Mr Laverack had responsibility were very much the Lost Boys. Some of them had been rejected by their mothers and fathers. Not a few had been sexually abused at home by their fathers, by their stepfathers, by the uncles and friends."

Mr Carlile read a description of Captain Hook from *Peter Pan*: "He is never more sinister that when he is at his most polite, and the elegance of his diction, the distinction of his demeanour, show him as one of a difference class from his crew."

'I don't think I can ever come to terms with what he did to me'

THE VICTIMS

ONE of Keith Laverack's victims spoke yesterday of how, nearly 25 years after the abuse ended, he remained psychologically scarred. The man, now 39 and married, with a daughter, was abused by Laverack between the ages of 14 and 16, while in a children's home.

The victim, who gave evidence against Laverack at Chester Crown Court, said he would never recover from the damage he had done. "I don't think I can ever come to terms with it. It doesn't go away — you suppress it."

He added: "Some people may say by coming here to give evidence you may lay the ghost to rest. But it doesn't. What you are looking for is justice; for someone to pay for the crimes they have perpetrated on others."

The man, who cannot be identified for legal reasons, said that Laverack's abuse had left him wary of men. "I am still uncomfortable to this day in male company," he explained. "I will not sit next to another man on a couch. I will not stand next to another man in a toilet."

He added: "I don't have male friends. Female friends, yes. But I don't trust anybody."

The man recalled his confusion and fear during the time he was being abused. He said there was no one he could tell, although he felt guilty for not having spoken out.

"You know it's wrong but where do you go? You want to tell somebody. The voice cries out to do something. But who do you tell? . . . I deeply regret that I didn't tell somebody when I was 14 or 16. Maybe it would have saved the boys who came after me."

He said that he had never disclosed the full extent of his suffering at the hands of Laverack — not even to his wife. And he said he was left with a feeling of worthlessness.

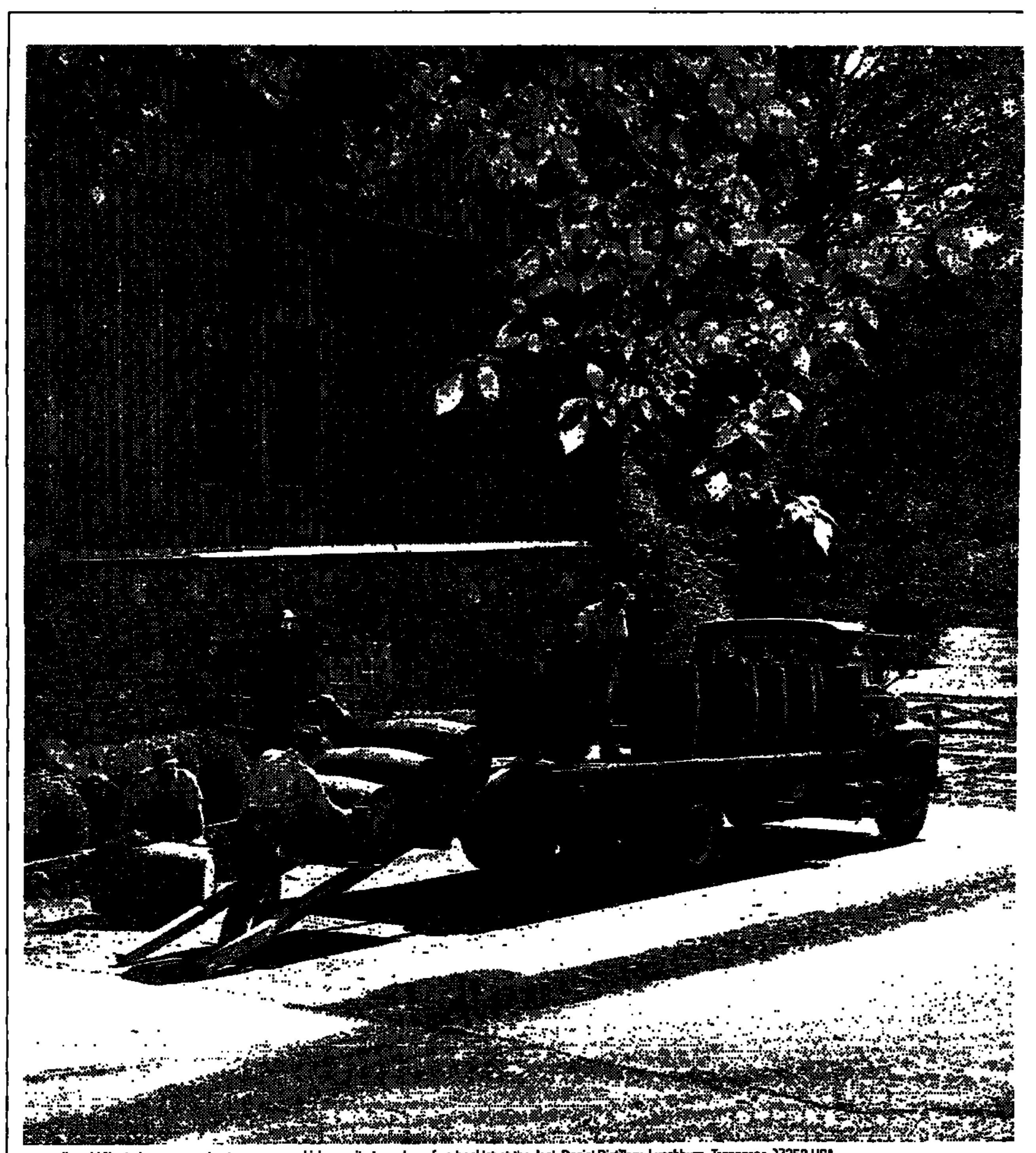
"If it were not for my family, my wife, my daughter, I would question what the point was and just call it a day," he added. "If I was on my own I would say, probably with a smile on my face: thank you, you can keep life."

The man said he had left the home where Laverack worked at 16 and "disappeared abroad". He had then drifted in and out of work before becoming a self-taught computer programmer. He had never caught up educationally.

He said that he still feared for children in care, believing that there were not sufficient checks to protect them from sexual abuse. "There are kids who are currently now in care who are being systematically abused," he said. "They are still going to be out there. Nothing is going to change."

He called for potential recruits to children's homes to be screened much more critically and thoroughly. Outside teams should visit homes unannounced and regularly to talk to children individually and gain their trust.

He did not want to talk about Laverack, but he said he hoped his former teacher "died in prison".



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Judge criticises council for misuse of taxpayers' money' by pursuing case

Lord of Manor right to charge for access

By Ian Murray, community correspondent

RESIDENTS of homes built on an ancient common must pay the Lord of the Manor whatever he asks to drive across his land to reach their front doors, the High Court decided yesterday.

The ruling means up to 150 families living on Bucklebury Common, near Newbury in Berkshire, will have to pay Robin Hartley Russell, 36, whose family has owned 820 acres of the land for at least 450 years. Although the householders own their properties, they will be breaking the law if they do not buy the right to cross the common to reach them. Mr Hartley Russell has charged between £5,000 and £50,000 to the 50 or so families who have already agreed to pay him for access rights. Newbury council took Mr Hartley Russell to court, saying its powers as managers of the common meant it could give residents permission to drive across the thin strip of land to their homes.

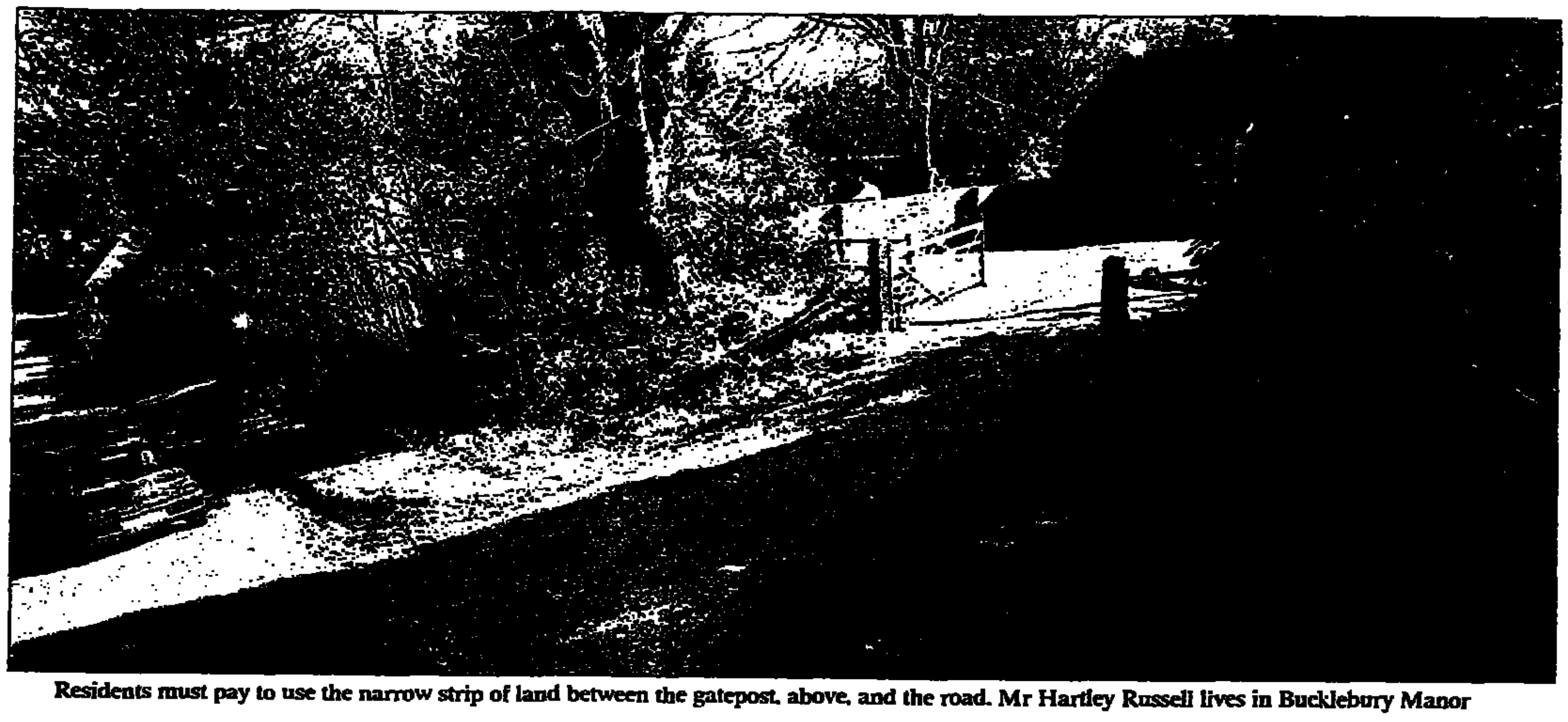
Hartley Russell: land in family for 450 years

David Mole QC, for the council, argued that a management scheme signed in 1929 between the Hartley Russell family and the local authority of the day under the Commons Act meant that the council was responsible for granting or restricting vehicular access.

The judge agreed the council had the right to prosecute if vehicles trespassed on the common, but said this did not mean the authority could grant access.

He said the scheme signed by the council does not have the effect of removing all the landowner's rights to object to trespass on his land, which had been in the Hartley Russell family as Lords of Bucklebury Manor since 1540. He could not see how the family did not retain the "fundamental" right to object to "trespassers" with cars on the land and to charge householders for using it.

The judge said this had always been a valuable right which had earned "substantial sums". Dismissing the council's case, he criticised the authority for using local taxpayers' money to fight an action which was not for the benefit of the community but to help "a few individual householders on the common". The council was ordered to pay costs, which are expected to total £10.000. Mr Hartley Russell said after the ruling that 50 to 60 home owners had already paid for the right to cross the common land and he would now consider what further steps to take to enforce his ancestral rights on the other residents.



Residents must pay to use the narrow strip of land between the gatepost, above, and the road. Mr Hartley Russell lives in Bucklebury Manor

He said a large proportion of the money would be ploughed back into improvement of the common. All the trees growing there are his personal property and his responsibility to maintain. He employs an estate office and a full time forester and estate manager and he said that if he had lost the case, he might well have had to make some staff redundant. "I am just delighted this matter has been settled and my rights as owner of this property have ben upheld by the court," he said. "I'm sorry it has fallen on local council tax-payers to pick up the bill."

Malcolm Pointer, his solicitor, said: "Common land is not public land, it is private land over which the public have leisure rights."

Neighbour denies VE-Day Nazi taunt

By Paul Wilkinson

A MAN who denied taunting his German neighbour by calling him a Nazi, waving a Union flag and singing *Land of Hope and Glory* on VE-Day claimed yesterday that his own great-grandfather was German.

Magistrates in Leeds heard that that there had been verbal warfare between Frederick Thorpe, an unemployed painter and decorator, and Siegfried Neumann who lived next door on a council estate in the Leeds district of Bramley.

David Taylor, prosecuting Mr Thorpe on charges of provocation to violence and harassment, said the Englishman had called Mr Neumann "Nazi", "Hun" and "Kraut". Mr Thorpe counter-claimed that Mr Neumann had called him an "English pig".

Mr Thorpe denied parading in his garden with the flag or singing. "I was in the pub until 9pm on VE-Day," he said. He claimed Mr Neumann, 52, had suggested he fry his children at a barbecue he threw in August 1995. The trial was adjourned until March 17.

CORRECTION

The chairman of Enfield Southgate Conservative Association is Lionel Zetter, not John Boast (report, March 1). Mr Boast was expressing a personal view; the association made no comment.

It's only rock and roll but politicians like it

By Alan Hamilton

NEVER mind what they say, listen to what they listen to. Would you vote for a politician who confessed to a liking for Meat Loaf — the singer, not the dish — or another who admitted once being into Dexy's Midnight Runners?

Three parliamentarians with a youth connection bare their soul — not to mention their rhythym and blues and Britpop — in the 1015 section of *The Times* today. The secret Meat Loaf addict is revealed as the outrageously youthful William Hague, Secretray of State for Wales and Tory spokesman on youth issues. At 35, Mr Hague appears to harbour the ambition to be the youngest Prime Minister since Pitt.

Asked what bands he likes, Mr Hague admits to a Meat Loaf addiction of some years' standing. "When I'm at home at the weekends I often stick *Bat Out Of Hell* on the CD player." Extremist politicians always risk losing the middle-of-the-road vote, so Mr Hague quickly adds that the last live concert he attended was given by that rather classier act, Diana Ross.

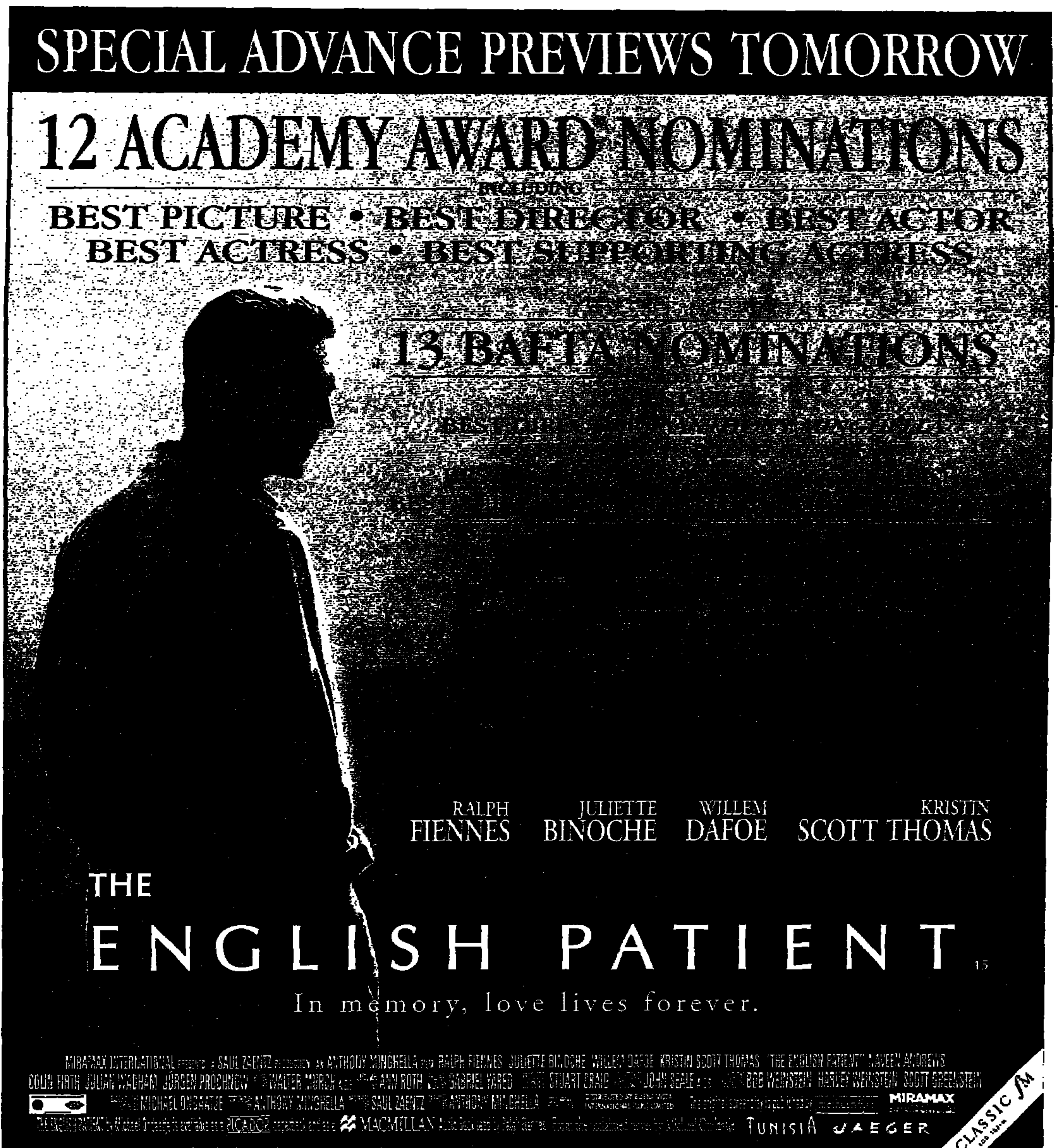
Passion runs higher in the breast of Mo Mowlam, Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary and chair of the Labour NEC youth committee. "The record I play most is *Walk On The Wild Side* by Lou Reed. I put it on when I'm feeling fed up and it makes me feel a lot better." But she astutely keeps a foot in more than one musical decade, having recently been to concerts by the mildly dated Pink Floyd and the exceedingly current Oasis.

The Liberal Democrat Matthew Taylor, at 24 the youngest MP in the current Parliament, plays the Lib Dem game of appealing to all manner of obscure interest groups, although he does say that a politician or pop star has a different lifestyle from everyone else.

He plays Jamiroquai in the car, admits to liking Oasis even though it is uncool to say so, and used to be into the Clash, the Specials, Madness and Dexy's Midnight Runners. His concert going tends to the Celtic fringe, having recently included Sinead O'Connor and Van Morrison.

Mr Taylor, despite his youth, is astute enough to have nothing to with bands tarred with the Tory brush. "The Spice Girls are popular but I try to avoid them. If they are doing it to get in the newspapers, then it's uninteresting. A lot of bands have put politics into their music. I'm not sure you can say that about the Spice Girls." Avoiding the Spice Girls is becoming daily more difficult.

1015, page 8



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GLASGOW Odeon Quay
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GLASGOW Virgin
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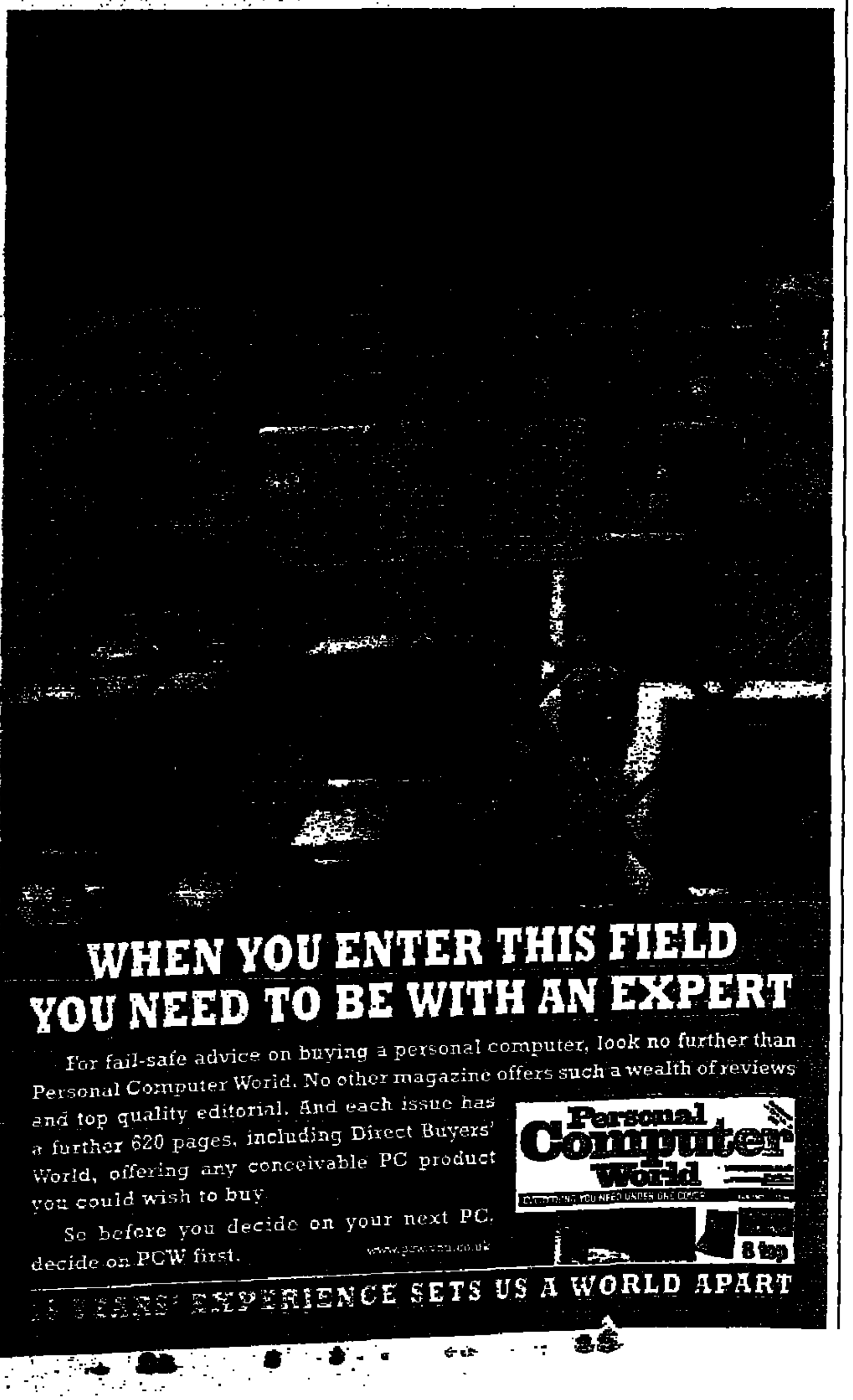

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[illegible] YEARS' EXPERIENCE SETS US A WORLD APART

Machete case nurse 'deserves honour'

By Paul Wilkinson

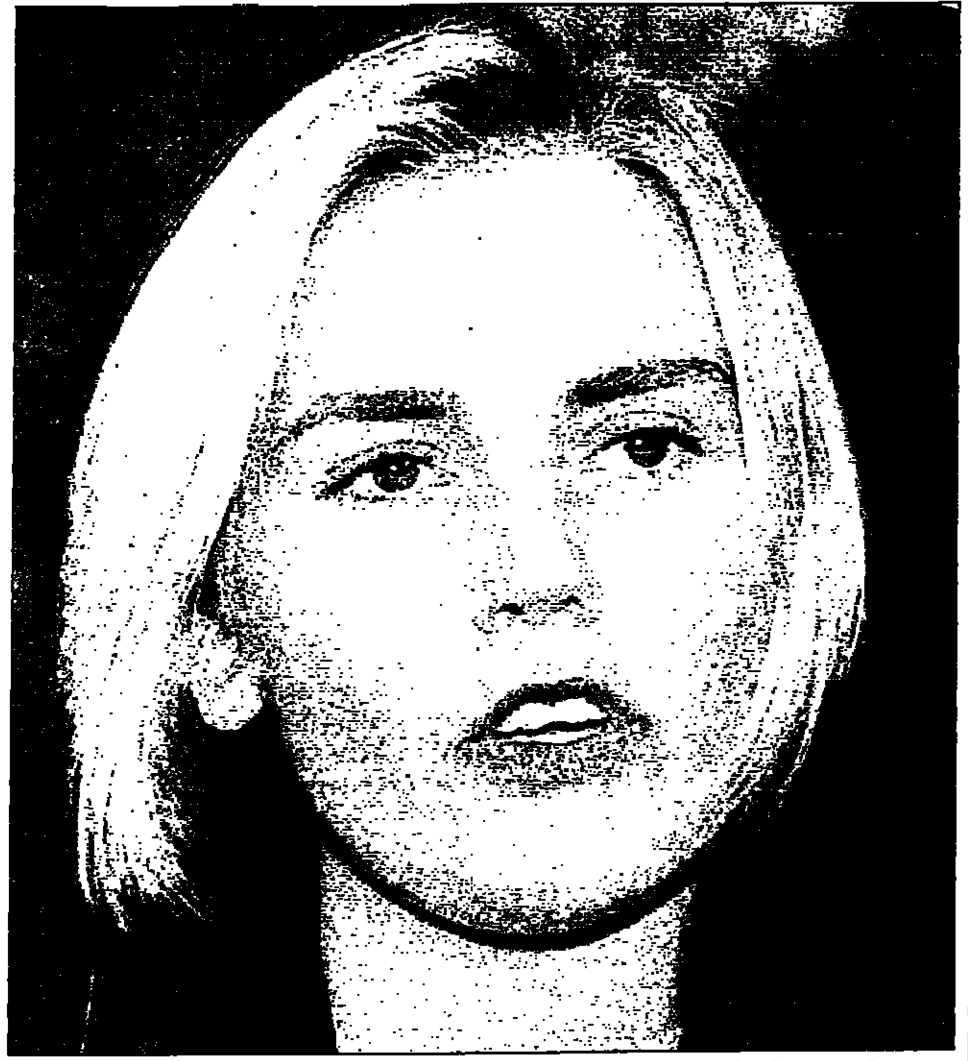
A JUDGE called yesterday for public recognition for Lisa Potts, the nursery nurse who risked her life to save children being attacked by a man wielding a machete.

Mr Justice Sedley, sitting at Teesside Crown Court, praised Miss Potts's courage and said: "It is now many months since the incident and it seems surprising that Miss Potts has not yet been sufficiently recognised for her bravery."

Miss Potts, 21, suffered a number of wounds as she tried to shield the children of St Luke's nursery in Blakenhall, Wolverhampton, during the unprovoked attack last July.

Horrett Campbell, 33, a schizophrenic, was convicted in December by Stafford Crown Court of attempted murder. Yesterday the judge committed him to psychiatric hospital while adjourning sentence for reports.

Miss Potts said: "I expected that he would go to a hospital. I think it is the best place for him so he can be treated."


DAVID JONES

Lisa Potts said that a psychiatric hospital was the best place for her attacker

Lord Chancellor raised court fees unlawfully

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE Lord Chancellor acted unlawfully when he imposed hefty court fees and denied poor people their ancient common law right of access to the courts, two judges ruled yesterday.

The High Court judges, Lord Justice Rose with Mr Justice Laws, ruled that Lord Mackay of Clashfern acted unlawfully by bringing in new fees with no reduction for financial hardship. The removal of powers to remit or waive fees was invalid.

An order bringing in higher fees and scrapping the exemptions was introduced in January by Lord Mackay and approved by the four senior judges and the Treasury. The effect of the order, Mr Justice Laws said, was "to bar absolutely many persons from seeking justice from the court" and there was no parliamentary authority for that.

Yesterday's ruling means that people on low incomes will again be able to apply for reductions in court fees and those who have paid the fees since January may be able to claim them back if they can show hardship. The judges refused permission for the Lord Chancellor's lawyers to appeal.

Mr Justice Laws said: "The right to a fair trial, which of necessity imports the right of access to the court, is as near to an absolute right as any which I can envisage.

"Access to the courts is a constitutional right: it can only be denied by the Government if it persuades Parliament to pass legislation which specifically permits the executive to turn away people from the court door. That has not been done in this case."

Lord Justice Rose added there was nothing to suggest Parliament ever intended "a power for the Lord Chancellor to prescribe fees so as totally to preclude the poor from access to the courts".

The Lord Chancellor's Department said that it was considering the implications of the decision and whether they would apply directly for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal.

An Essex businessman, John Witham, who is on income support, had launched the test challenge to the fees regime introduced under the Supreme Court Fees Order 1996 which scrapped the exemptions for those on income support. He wanted to sue an insurance firm for libel, but could not afford the new High Court writ fee of £500 which was raised from £120. Legal aid is not available in libel cases. Mr Witham did obtain legal aid for yesterday's challenge.

Mackay: judges ruled he denied access to courts

Mr Witham said afterwards: "Thank God we are in this country and subject to a hearing in this country. I will now go ahead with my libel action."

Geoffrey Bindman, of Bindman & Partners, the solicitors who acted for Mr Witham, said: "The judges are saying that fundamental rights trump Parliament. They are saying that when the Government, through delegated legislation, tries to take away basic rights, they will intervene to prevent it."

Stephen Grosz, Mr Witham's lawyer, added that in refusing leave to appeal, the judges "have sent out a clear message that the Government should not pursue this through the courts."

The new fees were introduced to cover the entire £310 million annual cost of the civil justice system rather than the four-fifths of the expenditure met last year.

Although yesterday's ruling only applies to the part of order dealing with fees exemptions and reductions in the High Court, the Government will now face pressure to ensure the provisions are restored in the county courts.

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Bingham pleads for simplified sentencing rules

By Russell Jenkins

THE Lord Chief Justice yesterday called on politicians to draw into one convenient statute the confusing strands of sentencing powers available to judges.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill expressed his sympathy with judges facing "extreme difficulty" keeping up with constantly changing maximum sentences as he heard an appeal in a case where a judge had handed down an unlawfully heavy term of imprisonment.

He told Arthur Street, 73, convicted at Chester Crown Court in September of indecent assault against a boy and two girls, that, partly because of the judge's error, he would serve three years in jail instead of five.

Lord Bingham was at Liverpool Crown Court for the first sitting of the Court of Appeal's Criminal Division outside London for almost 20 years. He wants to deliver justice as close as possible to its regional source. The appeal court may hold regular regional sittings, with Lord Bingham doing the travelling rather than the barristers, solicitors and families of appellants.

The concrete Queen Elizabeth II building which casts its shadow over Liverpool docks has none of the majesty of the Court of Appeal's 19th-century home in the Strand, central London. In one morning session, Lord Bingham heard seven appeals arising from criminal cases in Greater Manchester.

They involved a professional burglar "with an appalling record", a man who went on the run rather than face trial, a young man who threatened to kill a police officer, a crack cocaine smuggler, a drug dealer and a heroin addict turned burglar. Four left the dock with sentences significantly reduced.

In all but one case, Lord Bingham, sitting alongside Mr Justice Ognall and Mr Justice Thayne Forbes, was able to dispense justice after a short huddle on the bench. They retired only once to consider the technicalities of the indecent assault case.

When they returned, Lord Bingham told the court that he understood the extreme difficulties facing judges in trying to keep up with complexities of modern statute law. "We would greatly welcome consolidation of sentencing powers in one convenient statute," Lord Bingham said.

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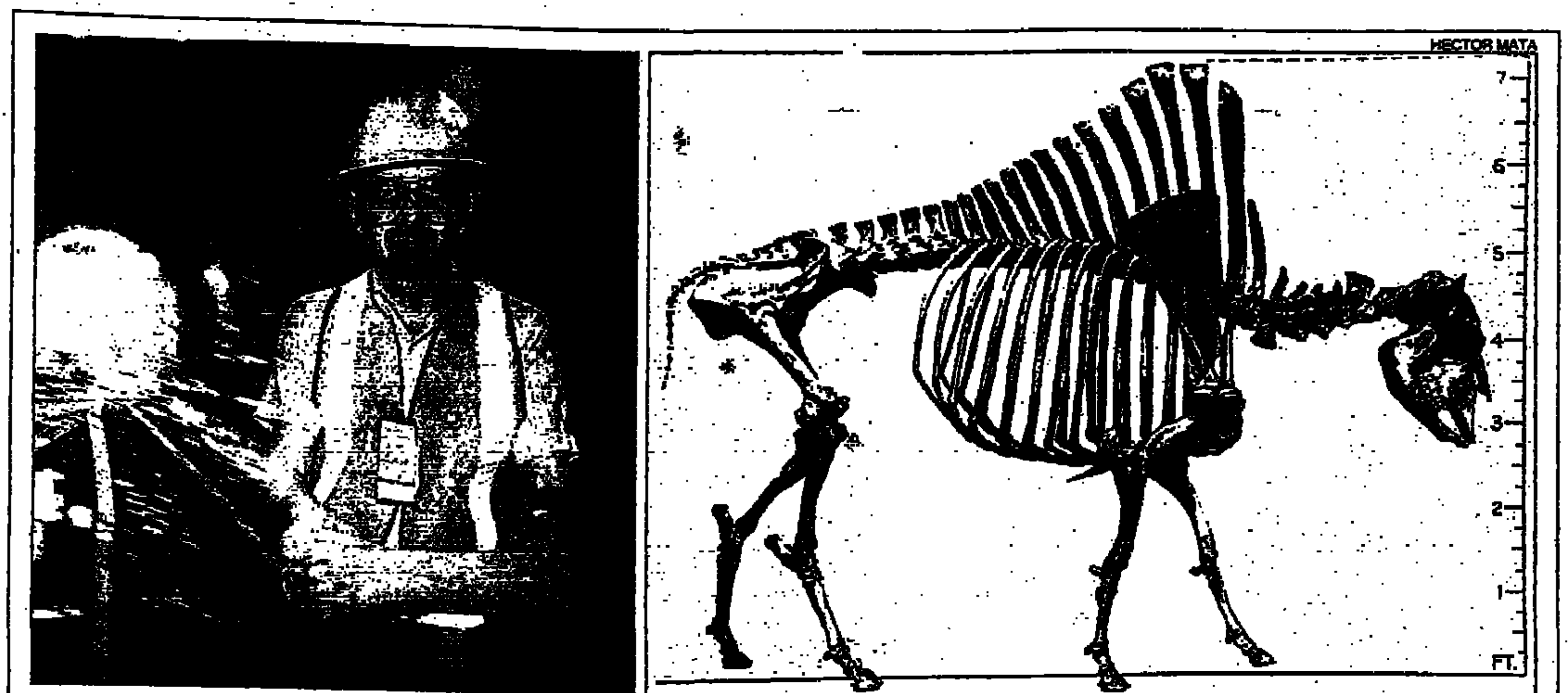


Bruce Lander holds the bone of a bison that roamed the area up to 10,000 years ago. The skeleton shows they grew to seven feet high

Jurassic past showing on Hollywood Boulevard

IN HOLLYWOOD, prehistoric usually means before the "talkies". But under the gaze of a billboard *Jurassic Park* dinosaur, scientists are turning up denizens of the past eight million years as they sift through construction site rubble.

In an area of Los Angeles dotted with trendy cafés and restaurants, they are finding the fossilised remains of tusked mastodons, horses, camels and bison which roamed there until the end of the Ice Age 10,000 years ago.

The remains are now surfacing as Bruce Lander, a palaeontologist, and Robin Turner, an archaeologist, work in an 85ft deep trench that has been excavated for a new subway in Hollywood Boulevard. It is close to the Universal Studios' theme park that features animated dinosaurs. Cranes and earth movers have hauled out tons of rock, revealing fossils from pollen to mammoth bones and lantern fish.

Until a million years ago, Los Angeles was under water. Then it evolved into a desert before adopting a cooler, wet climate. "Sometimes I catch myself saying, Oh my God, I'm the first person to hold this because this came from a time before there were even people," Ms Turner said. Although they have already accumulated much material, she recalled watching helplessly as a 7ft tuna fossil disappeared up a conveyer belt and was crushed.

More happily, she recalled finding fossilised dolphin excrement containing complete fossils of the fish the dolphin had digested. "I was so excited I squealed," she said.

Bronze Age cities may have been destroyed by comet

By Nigel Hawkes, science editor

A SERIES of natural disasters which befell Bronze Age civilisations in many parts of the world may have been the result of comets or meteorites smashing into the Earth from outer space.

New evidence, to be discussed at a conference in Cambridge in July, is likely to give that idea greater academic respectability. The conference, organised by Dr Benny Peiser, a historian from Liverpool Moores University, will discuss whether extraterrestrial impacts can explain the destruction of cities and changes of climate that eliminated agriculture from large regions.

The most exciting new evidence comes from Dr Marie-Agnes Courty, a French expert in the microscopic study of soils and sediments. She is expected to report that samples from three regions of the Middle East, taken from levels corresponding to the period around 2,200 BC when there were abrupt climatic changes, contain tiny spheres of a calcite material unknown on Earth but found in meteorites.

She has also found evidence of huge fires in a layer of burnt soil. The amount of black carbon in the layer is unlikely to come from local grassland fires, she says. It is more likely to come from enormous forest fires in other regions. Volcanic activity cannot explain the evidence, she says.

Dr Peiser says there is an abundance of evidence of violent change in many Bronze Age cultures at the same time. More than one event seems to have occurred, but at around 2,200 BC civilisations in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley in India, and Egypt all appear to have collapsed.

Much later, at the end of the Bronze Age, around 1,200 BC, the Chang dynasty in China and the Mycenaean civilisation in Greece disappeared at the same time. The original evidence was gathered by the French archaeologist Claude Schaeffer and published almost half a century ago.

He found that Bronze Age sites over a huge area of the near and Middle East showed evidence of four destructive episodes, the three most prominent being at 2,300 BC, 1,650 BC, and 1,200 BC. He concluded that the destruction of cities at more than 40 sites at the same times could only have been caused by massive earthquakes.

But earthquakes, even the biggest, have only local effects, so Schaeffer's explanation is no longer accepted. The alternative, which the Cambridge conference will consider, is that during the Bronze Age the Earth was hit not once but several times by debris from space, most likely from a comet broken into pieces.

"We know that such impacts have happened in the distant past," Dr Peiser says. "The question is whether it could also have happened within human experience."

Loaves are recalled over wire danger

By Dareh Gregorian

A BAKERY that supplies leading supermarkets is recalling up to a million loaves after some of the bread was found to be contaminated by pieces of wire.

Harvestime Bakeries of Leicester says that the products at risk are 800g white sliced loaves sold by Tesco, Sainsbury, Safeway, Kwik Save and Choice, and the Harvestime 800g white sliced loaf.

Ian Toal, the company's sales and marketing head, said that customers had bought loaves containing pieces up to a centimetre long. "No one was hurt. The metal is clearly visible against the background of white bread.

"A week's output — about one million loaves — is involved, but we estimate only one in 20,000 could be affected. The product is no longer on sale, but we are concerned that customers could have stored loaves in the freezer."

The loaves would have been bought early this week, primarily in the Midlands. They have "best before" dates of February 27 and 28, and March 1, 2, 3 and 4, and the identification code HF.

Harvestime can be telephoned on 0116 246 0800.

Pop stars boarded by Bulgarian CD pirates

By Robin Young

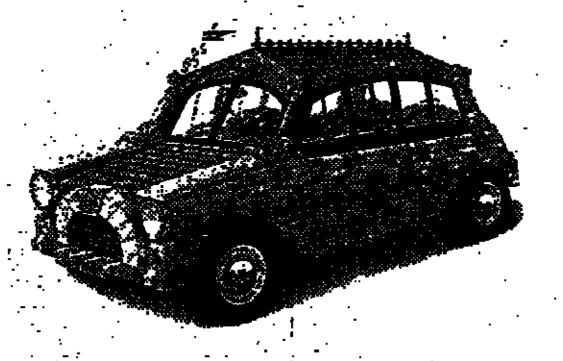
THE Spice Girls, Blur, Oasis and Take That have something other than pop music in common with Elton John and the Beatles: they are all victims of Bulgarian pirates.

Despite promises made at the beginning of December, when Bulgaria was accepted into the World Trade Organisation, five factories are continuing to flood international markets with counterfeit CDs.

Frances Moore, director of European affairs for the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, said yesterday: "The Bulgarians are completely undermining the industry. They are blatantly breaking their promises, robbing pop stars and composers of their royalties and record companies of their sales. They simply must be stopped, or the record industry will not have any future."

Ms Moore said of the five factories known still to be producing pirate CDs in Bulgaria: "We estimate conservatively that they are producing at least 15 million records a year."

The federation is demanding that Bulgaria be expelled from the World Trade Organisation unless it keeps the promises it made to get in.



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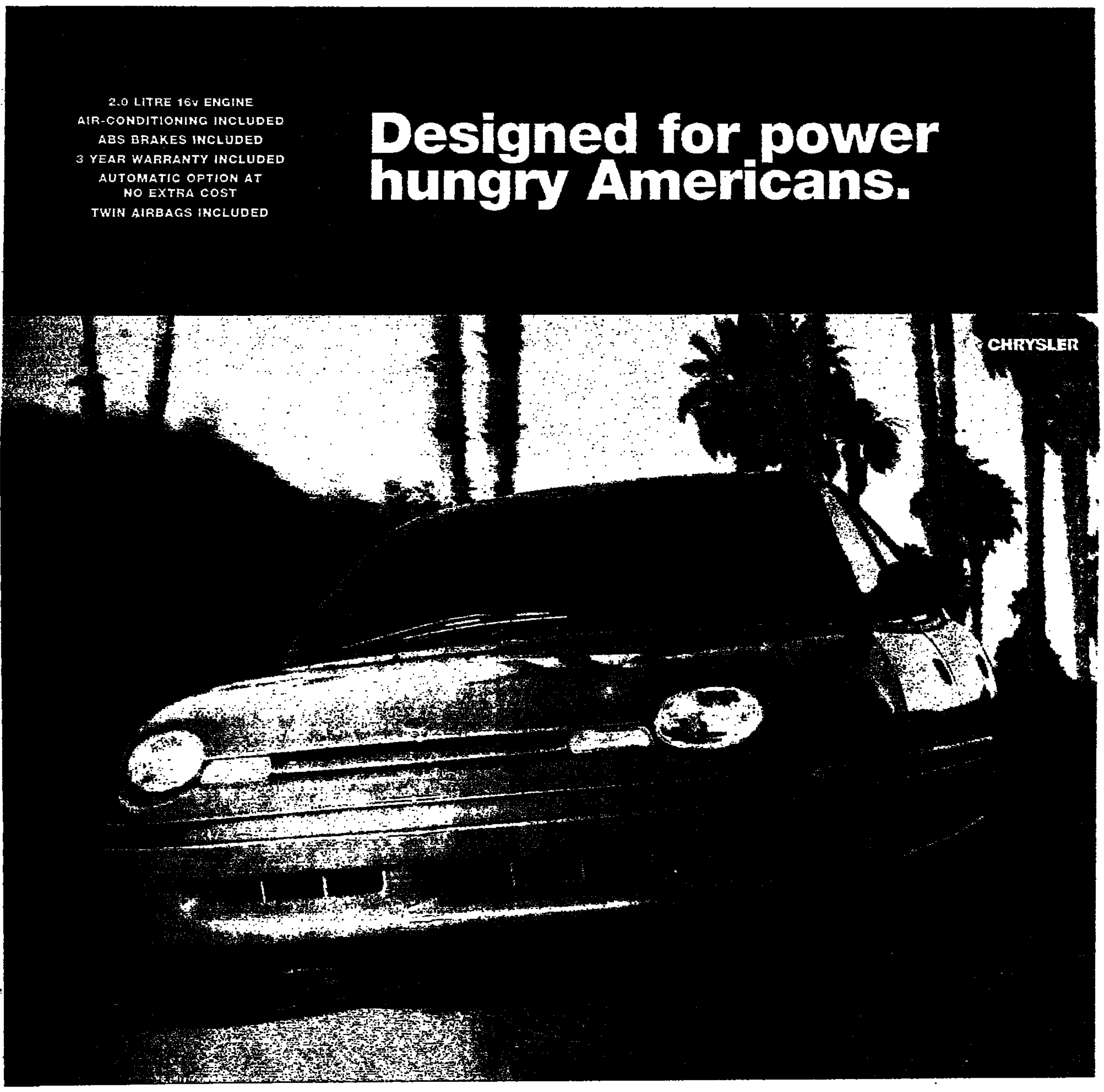

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Countryside groups join forces against threat of Labour win

By Michael Hornsby, countryside correspondent

THREE countryside pressure groups are to merge in an attempt to create a powerful new organisation to fight Labour moves that may outlaw hunting and limit the rights of landowners.

The British Field Sports Society (BFSS) will amalgamate with the Countryside Movement (CM) and the Countryside Business Group (CBG). It is hoped the move will be agreed by the end of the month.

The Labour Party is committed to provide parliamentary time for a Private Member's Bill to ban fox and stag hunting and would also introduce a public "right to roam" over all uncultivated private land if elected.

The merger appears to be a takeover by the BFSS, founded in 1930, of the two newer groups, which were launched with much fanfare in 1995 but have failed to attract either the money or attention for which they hoped. The chairman of the BFSS, Charles Goodson-Wickes, Tory MP for Wimbledon, and its chief executive, Robin Hanbury-Tenison, will hold the same positions in the new organisation, which will be at BFSS headquarters in London. The BFSS will also supply ten of 20 board members.

There is still no agreement on what the new body should be called. Countryside Campaign and British Countryside have been suggested, but a strong faction at the BFSS wants to retain the society's name and simply create a new countryside committee.

Sir David Steel, the executive chairman of the CM, who is to be a deputy chairman of the new organisation, said: "It is certainly true that the CM did not attract the substantial funds I had expected. There have been too many of us running round trying to get money from the same people."

Much of the funding for the CM was supposed to have come from the CBG, which has so far raised less than £700,000 of the planned £5 million a year from businesses such as saddlers, gunmakers and fishing tackle companies.

Already there are signs, however, that the merger will sharpen as many divisions as it heals. Ken Ball, president of the National Federation of Anglers, who is on the board of the CM, said: "I will not be joining the new organisation. Our members are not in favour of a closer tie-up with BFSS, which would drag them into the hunting debate."

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC), which refused a merger with the BFSS last year, will also be staying outside the new body. The National Farmers' Union, which is studiously neutral on hunting, is also distancing itself from the new body.

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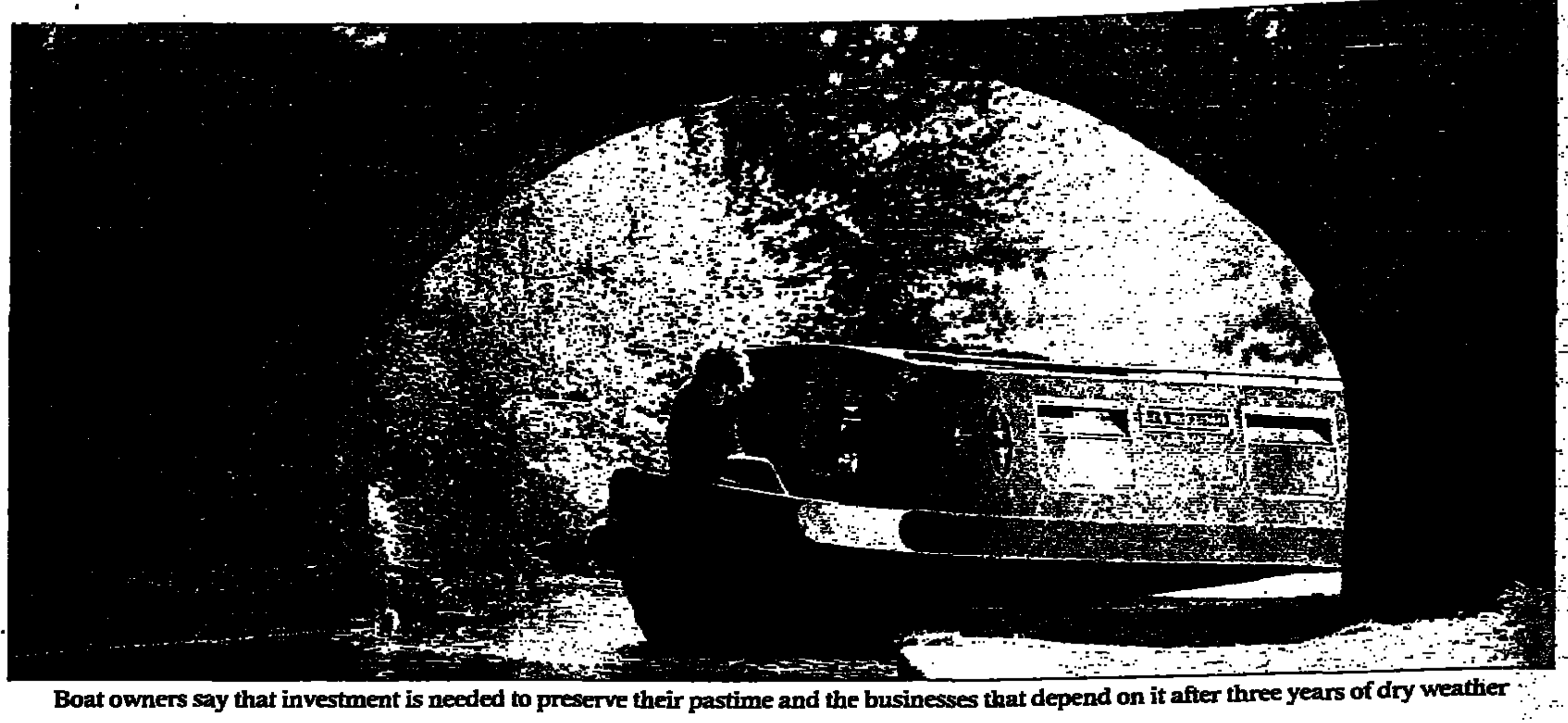
PAUL EDWARDS



Boat owners say that investment is needed to preserve their pastime and the businesses that depend on it after three years of dry weather

Bottom drops out of canal market as drought bites

By Nick Nuttall

BOAT OWNERS are demanding urgent action to counter the impact of three years of dry weather on canals and rivers and the consequent threat to livelihoods and hobbies.

The low level of waterways is causing craft to ground and propellers and hulls to be damaged, it was claimed yesterday. The problem is aggravated by water being abstracted for domestic and agricultural use from rivers that feed canals. On the Severn, pleasure craft are hitting debris on the river-bed, the National Association of Boat Owners said.

Water shortages have led to lock restrictions on many canals, as British Waterways, which manages most of the network, has attempted to conserve resources. Restrictions on the use of locks are to be introduced this month on stretches of the Grand Union and South Oxford canals.

Peter Lea, head of the association, said yesterday that there was a threat not only to the pastime of boating but to repair yards, public houses and other businesses that depended on leisure craft. He added that canals and navigable rivers were a haven for wildlife and enjoyed by birdwatchers, anglers, walkers and riders. The boat owners' association, which has 2,000 members, held talks with senior executives at British Waterways earlier this week.

Mr Lea said that they wanted investment in the network. Funds were needed for pumping gear to prevent water running from canals into the rivers and the sea and to build new reservoirs or clean out silt and mud from existing ones to increase their capacity.

Woodward: told mother

Au pair gave dying baby 'kiss of life'

From Quentin Letts
in Boston

LOUISE WOODWARD, the British au pair accused of murdering a nine-month-old American baby, tried to give the child the kiss of life after he became ill, according to her mother.

Susan Woodward said yesterday that her daughter had told her what went on during the evening last month she is alleged to have shaken the baby, who later died in hospital from a head injury. "I asked her to just look me in the eyes and tell me what happened that day," Mrs Woodward said on a Boston radio station. "She gave him the kiss of life. She knows that she did everything she could for him."

Miss Woodward, 19, of Elton, Cheshire, was formally charged with the first degree murder of Matthew Eappen, when she appeared in a Boston court yesterday. A post-mortem examination found that Matthew had suffered multiple injuries.

Miss Woodward, who arrived at the courthouse from a woman's prison, faces a sentence of life imprisonment if found guilty. Her mother said of her daughter: "She is looking forward to the case unfolding so that people will realise that she is completely innocent of anything, and that she had nothing to do with what happened to Matthew."

The baby's parents are both medical professionals from Newton, Massachusetts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Burst of buyers for bubble cars

The biggest private collection of bubble cars — assembled over two decades by Bruce Weiner, a Canadian bubble gum magnate — has fetched £447,400 at auction. Christie's sold an example of the world's smallest production car, the 1964 Peel Trident, styled "the cosiest courting car in the world", for £28,750. The top price, of £29,900, was paid for a 1960 Tg 500 Tiger Cabriolet.

Train delays

Rail passengers heading for the West Country can expect lengthy delays after the main line to Devon and Cornwall was blocked by a derailment. Great Western Trains said westbound InterCity services would terminate at Exeter and eastbound trains at Plymouth.

Carrier mission

An official expedition to try to solve the mystery of the carrier *Derbyshire*, which sank in a typhoon off Japan in 1980 with the loss of all 44 crew, begins today. Trade unions and shipping experts have argued that structural defects, not the weather, caused the disaster.

Butlins fined

Butlins has been fined £25,000 after a monorail accident at its Somerwest World holiday camp in Minehead last August. The firm pleaded guilty at West Somerset Magistrates' Court to failing to ensure the safety of employees and passengers.

In the mire

A commuter who had been celebrating promotion spent the night in a marsh after falling asleep then leaving his train six stops too soon. The cold, dazed and mud-covered man, in his 30s, was found at dawn by John Myatt, a farmer at High Halstow, Kent.

Beggars belief

A Gurkha recruit based at Crookham, Hampshire, sent into Guildford to improve his English by chatting to shoppers, remarked in an essay that the people were so well off that "even the beggars wear pearls". He had been stopped by a flag-day collector.

Subaru

3

Monte Carlo Rally
Swedish Rally
Safari Rally

Rest of the World

0

Subaru, World Rally Champions 1995 and 1996, score their third consecutive victory in the first three 1997 World Championship fixtures. A hat-trick confirmed by Colin McRae's blistering run in the Subaru Impreza 555 taking 7 of the 12 stages to win the car-breaking Safari Rally in Kenya. Proof again, that Subaru all-wheel drive grip, performance and toughness dominate, while the rest of the world chases the game 3 - nil down.

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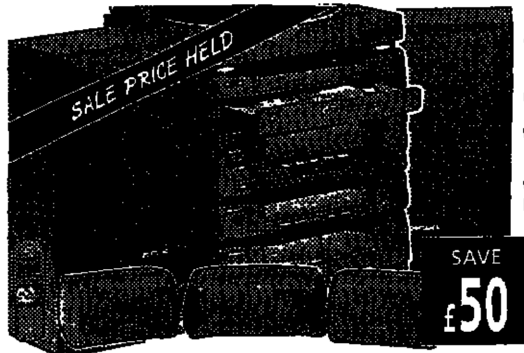

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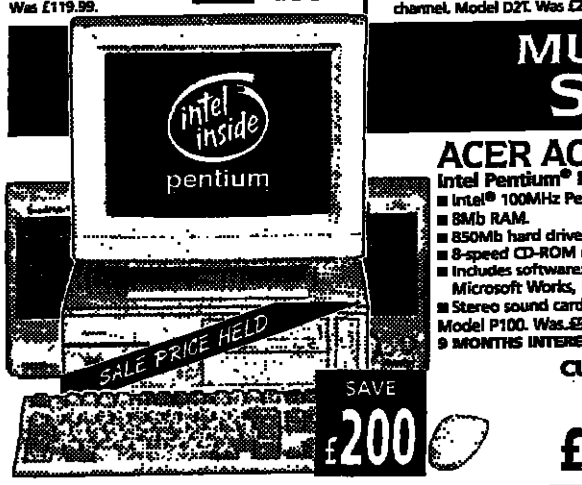

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Living life to the full should be for the greater good

Dom Antony Sutch

Credo

NACHELLE CROWTHER

Father Antony Sutch at Downside Roman Catholic School, whose patron is Pope St Gregory The Great

Few men or women have been able to achieve a lifestyle that rings so true, and so captures the ingredients of *human fulfilment, that it speaks to* generation after generation. One such man was Pope St Gregory The Great, who was born in about 540. It is because of his way of life that he was chosen as patron of the monastery and school at Downside, where we follow the ancient tradition of celebrating his Feast on March 12, though the rest of the Catholic Church now keeps it in September.

In his early thirties, Gregory held high office as Urban Prefect in Rome, but found it difficult to balance the demands of secular work, the interests of his office, and the contemplative ideal. He retired to a monastic community. However, *his talents* were such that he was called from there into high office once more — this time in the Church. Wisely, when he left his monastery, he took with him some brethren, "so that moved by their example I might be held, as by the chain of an anchor, to the firm land of prayer, while *buffeted* with ceaseless waves of worldly business". He undertook his duties reluctantly but fully. He had a grasp of detail, a keen eye for efficiency, and a profound concern for justice and welfare. He intervened personally to check unjust extortion, and refused to let the Church reap the profits of oppression. He dealt personally with all complaints. He was the first Pope to use the title "Servant of the Servants of God". This surely should describe the human destiny of us all.

Pope St Gregory The Great lived life to the full. He pursued his duties and his responsibilities, recognising that any talent he had was a gift that must be put to use for others. His own preference was subordinated to the greater good. Although living by an absolute creed and by the highest *moral standards, and always con*scious of ultimate truth, he nevertheless took the world for what it was, and attempted to make it always more wholesome and goodly.

The human person is one. It is impossible to separate the spiritual from the physical. What a person is must include what a person does. The fullness of a person must be formed by thought and meditation, and be characterised by a constant search for what is the truth. From this flow *the actions of any person's life.* A man's or woman's actions are not to be hidebound by theory, but must accord with a growing knowledge of what is right and what is good.

Too many today live superficially. Too many act from prejudice rather than principle. Too many fail to realise the importance, the vital importance, of an inner knowledge and truth. To be flexible and to adapt one's ideas is necessary — as St Gregory's life reminds us — in a society that is *pluralistic. Otherwise* conflicts arise and evil will triumph in the chaos. Yet there still must be the ground-rock of absolutes. For St Gregory, that meant Christ and His teachings.

Cardinal Basil Hume, the Archbishop of Westminster, has given a picture of the human task by saying that a person should be in the market place, but not necessarily of it. In this way the integrity of *the individual* is *maintained,* yet there is tolerance for another. There should always be *openness,* both of the inner self and the outer self. The spirituality of the human being is formed, yet constantly renewing. So with the human race: as a whole it searches for the truth.

Ultimately, if the spirituality of a people is right, it will lead to the knowledge of the Creator of that people. I believe, argue and offer the Christian message, but not to the point of denying the integrity and rights of another. How much better if we search for the truth together with a pure heart and a pure mind, and encourage each other. *In this way all of us will* become servants of the servants of God.

The words of St Francis of Assisi, "It is in giving that we receive", are another way to sum up that title of St Gregory. He saw the fullness of humankind in prayer and action. So his Benedictine life speaks to us, through the centuries, echoing the words "to work is to pray" and, we must never forget, "to pray is to work".

Dom Antony Sutch is the Head Master of Downside School

At Your Service, Weekend, page 11

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

Pope St Gregory The Great: inspirational lifestyle

Sex is new religion of the West, vicar says

By Ruth Gledhill

SEX has taken over from religion as the new spirituality of society, according to an Anglican parish priest. The Rev Charles Pickstone writes in a book published this week: "The world of sex today is an outlet for natural instincts, a displacement of religious energies. Sex has become a path to an encounter with a primordial mystery."

In *For Fear of the Angels,* Mr Pickstone, vicar of St Laurence's in Catford, south-east London, says: "In the past, to escape from suffering, people worshipped God; but today sex is the drug most *frequently used to give relief* from the stress of living in a rapidly changing society." Sex, like religion, can transport the individual to a world of ecstasy and heightened experience. "Sex is the new spirituality."

Mr Pickstone, art critic for *the current affairs review, The Month*, says so many people are writing, talking and fantasising about sex because it has taken on many of the functions once performed by religion. "Sex has become the religion of the Western world, the bearer of most people's hopes of encountering something truly 'other'."

Church exiles X-Files adverts

By A Staff Reporter

THE Church of England has dropped plans for an Easter advertising campaign based on the television science fiction series *The X-Files*, after copyright problems.

The Church had been planning a high-street billboard campaign featuring the show's catchphrase, "the truth is out there", as well as its distinctive X symbol. Posters would have been displayed outside churches, focusing on the Christian Cross with the message, "The Truth is Here".

However, the Churches' Advertising Network, which produced the Bad Hair Day *posters last Christmas,* was forced to cancel the proposed campaign after being unable to reach an agreement with Twentieth Century Fox, the programme's distributors.

Images associated with the series had been planned. The Rev Richard Thomas, for the network, *said:* "We had thought it was a strong but traditional campaign focusing on the Cross. We would have spoken to people in a language they understood. We know there is a huge communications gap between the Church's culture and that of people in secular society. We have to bridge that gap."

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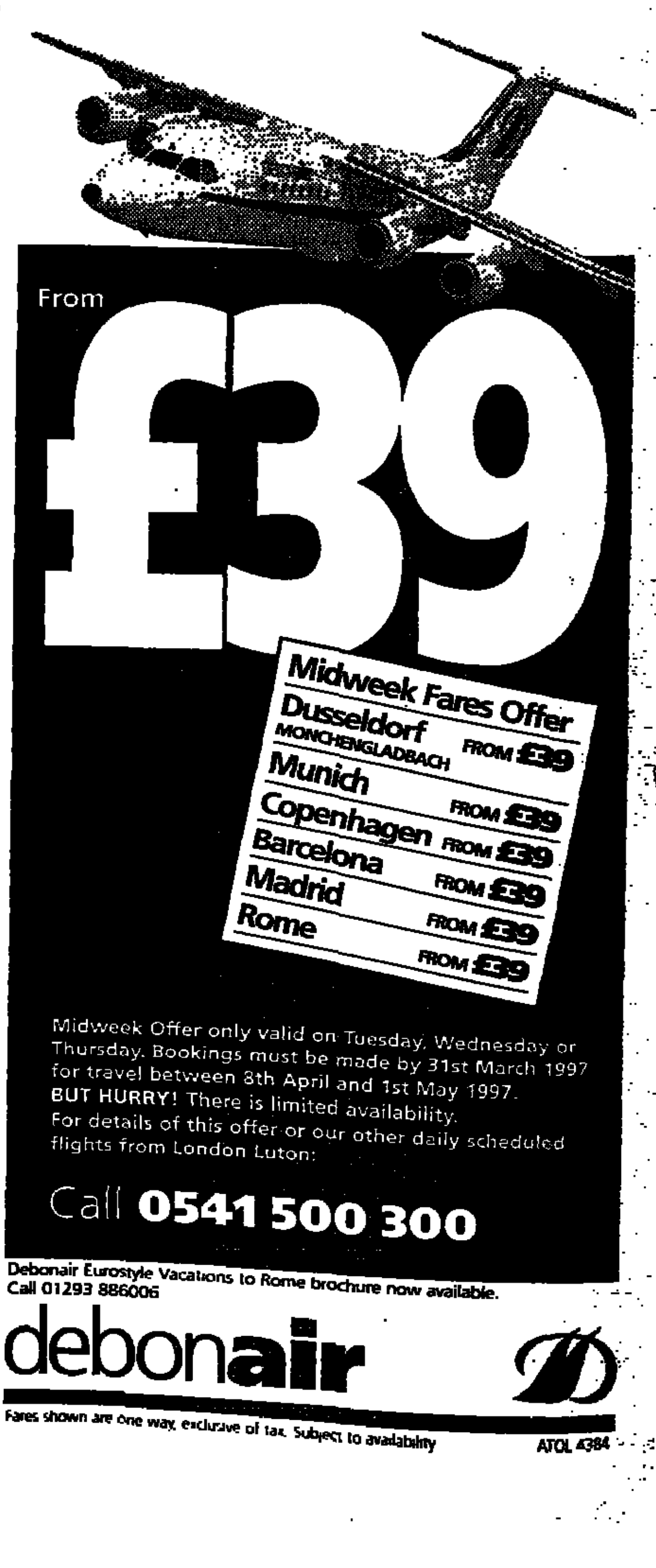

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'I lost my husband on that day; I also lost my son. These people will be responsible for other deaths'

Schizophrenic who killed was let down by system

By Adrian Lee

A SCHIZOPHRENIC who killed his stepfather and stabbed his mother was failed by the professionals who should have helped him, one of the most damning reports on mental health care said yesterday.

Mary Collins, 49, who survived five knife wounds inflicted by her son, Martin Mursell, was led away in tears after hearing that despite a series of blunders, no one had been sacked or disciplined by the local authority involved. The chairwoman of Camden and Islington Health Authority in north London later said she would consider her position.

Social workers, housing officers and doctors all let Mursell down, the report said. His mother had pleaded for help but her son was released from hospital against his will before carrying out the attack at the family home in Islington in October 1994. Joseph Collins, Mursell's disabled stepfather, died after he was stabbed 18 times.

Mursell, 28, is detained at Rampton Hospital after an Old Bailey judge, who ordered the inquiry, imposed a life sentence.

Denman: apologised to Mursell's mother

His mother, comforted by Jayne Zito, whose husband was also killed by a mental patient, said: "I came across people who just did not care. It was nothing to do with lack of funding ... they wanted nice cosy jobs. They did not want to deal with people like Martin. He could have had a life if they had done their jobs. I lost my husband on that day; I also lost my son. They are going to be responsible for other deaths and other families being destroyed."

Lincoln Crawford, the barrister who headed the inquiry, said that Mursell had received minimal support. The failures were fundamental and depressing. "It was, in my view, a failure by all the professionals involved," he said.

A drug user, Mursell had a history of violence and the authorities had been aware of a serious mental problem for five years. He had threatened to kill members of his family and "do a Hungerford".

His social workers Andrew Suttleworth and Yvonne Luby were inexperienced. A week before the attack, Mursell's mother wrote in despair to social services but was given no help. Norman Harvey and Jason Taylor, the doctors who discharged Mursell from Waterlow Psychiatric Unit, were taking a risk, said the report, and made poor arrangements for his care. His relapse was predictable.

Mursell told police he stabbed his mother and stepfather because they were "giving him looks".

The inquiry panel called yesterday for a central body to control mental health. It said care in the community was a workable policy.

Following publication of the 111-page report, Sylvia Denman, chairwoman of Camden and Islington Health Authority, apologised to Mrs Collins. Mrs Denman said the authority had made improvements but she would now consider resigning.

Social workers involved in the case had not been disciplined but no longer worked for the authority. Further inquiries would be conducted by social services and Camden and Islington Community Health Services Trust. Dr Harvey is still employed at the psychiatric unit.

Marjorie Wallace, chief executive of Sane, the mental health charity, said she would be writing to the Health Secretary to demand the resignation of Dr Harvey, Mrs Denman and Hannah Miller, Islington's chief social services officer. "This is a quite clear case of negligence and Martin Mursell should sue. This is one of the most outrageous cases we have seen." There had now been between 20 and 30 similar reports, she said.

Mursell's mother, who almost died in the attack, said she visited her son monthly at Rampton and he was progressing well. She was angered by claims by representatives of the local authority that the system, not individuals, were to blame. "It is not good enough to say no one could be held responsible - they are bloody well responsible. It's just not on. I want them to suffer too. Not one of them said 'sorry', not one of them said 'how are you?'"

KARL PROUSE

Mary Collins at a press conference after the inquiry's report was published yesterday

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'King Rat' jailed for threatening to shoot woman

By Audrey Magee, Ireland Correspondent

A LEADING Ulster loyalist nicknamed King Rat was jailed for eight years yesterday for threatening to kill a woman now living under police protection at a secret address in England.

Billy Wright, 36, was also found guilty at Belfast Crown Court of perverting the course of justice by threatening the woman's son.

Wright made his threats against Gwen Reed during a punishment attack on her daughter's boyfriend in a field near a loyalist estate in Portadown, Co Armagh in August 1995. Mrs Reed, 42, from Portadown, challenged Wright in defence of the man; Wright responded by shouting: "I am going to shoot you."

Lord Justice McCollum yesterday congratulated Mrs Reed for coming forward with her evidence against Wright. He said she was scrupulously honest, reliable, accurate and truthful and served as an example to others in Northern Ireland.

Wright, also from Portadown, has a fearsome reputation within Northern Ireland and has survived at least six attempts on his life by the IRA. He believes he has spent 12 months in police custody cells being questioned about various sectarian murders and other terrorist actions.

Within the Protestant community he is viewed as a dangerous loose cannon. He was behind the huge loyalist rally in Drumcree last year and is believed to have encouraged the Orangemen to use heavy machinery to break down the RUC and army barriers. In August 1996 the Combined Loyalist Military Command ordered Wright to leave Northern Ireland within 72 hours or be murdered. He did not and survived. However, the death sentence still remains.

He joined the loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Volunteer Force, as a young man after witnessing the IRA kill ten Protestants near his home. He spent three years in jail on arms and hijacking charges and was held for another ten months on the word of a so-called supergrass. One RUC detective who had questioned him said: "He's as hard as nails and very, very shrewd. He knows no fear and is prepared to die for his beliefs."

Wright was not in the dock yesterday as the judge passed sentence at the end of the two-week trial. He had earlier asked to be escorted away, protesting his innocence. At one stage during Lord Justice McCollum's judgment, he said: "I want nothing to do with this."

In his judgment, Lord Justice McCollum described Wright as an "inscrutable witness whose evidence wasn't capable of belief".

Wright's relatives and friends, who also left the courtroom, claimed he had been the victim of an "act of political desperation to crush the resistance of Protestant people, their culture and religious freedom".

Two other Portadown men convicted of assault and causing grievous bodily harm for their part in the punishment beating were also sentenced. Trevor Buchanan, 29, received eight years, and Dale Wethered, 29, seven years.

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Seaside carnival of 'happy fire' as rebel gunmen declare war on Berisha

Anthony Loyd in Sarande watches a ragtag army of protesters, burning with hatred, turn economic discontent into a full-scale political revolution

SOUTHERN ALBANIA appears more in the grip of anarchy than rebellion. The trigger-happy remnants of President Berisha's army, confused and frightened, are without orders or aim; the diverse rebel groups are equally without command or structure. The hills echo to the sound of automatic gunfire while the roads are controlled by a host of different militias, each with contrary intentions.

Yet the rebels unit are in agreement on one issue. Without exception they reject Mr Berisha's offer of an amnesty in return for handing in captured weapons and are determined to fight unless he resigns. What happens in the next few days seems as certain to be confused as it is bloody. "Berisha is a tyrant of the worst kind," said a young fighter commanding an improvised checkpoint outside the rebel-held port of Sarande. "He is a liar and a traitor. None of us trusts his offers or his Chinese smile. There is no way we shall hand back our weapons. Unless Berisha resigns at once, the bloodshed shall begin. We shall accept nothing other than the establishment of an interim government. If not — it's war."

A few miles away, on the torn road leading to the Greek border, a nervous unit of government soldiers searched civilians, travellers and the first groups of refugees heading south. There was a frantic haste in the way they tore open bags and rummaged through people's belongings, and amid their swearing and shouts they kept turning to look at the hills behind them. The three ancient T55 tanks positioned round them seemed more a liability than an asset: rebels partly blew up the one bridge leading northwards, rendering it unusable to armour. "They are Berisha's terror," an Albanian whispered, "but their time is coming".

The promenade along the waterfront in Sarande was deserted, but for groups of rebels who were zeroing in their Kalashnikovs on empty bottles bobbing in the sea. Palm trees waved dreamily in the breeze behind them, while Corfu rose out of the sea mist beyond. The secret police headquarters, an attractive stone building, was wrecked by fire and surrounded by burnt, bullet-ridden government vehicles. The only traffic consisted of trucks of youths laden with grenades and Eastern bloc hardware speeding in all directions.

In the distance someone fired an artillery piece at nothing in particular. It was an almost surreal atmosphere: revolution in a seaside resort with the suggestion of only worse to come.

So far, other than the cacophony of gratuitous "happy fire" into the sky and isolated sniping incidents in nearby towns, the 48-hour ceasefire appears to be holding, but more through luck than intent. At one point a group of rebels tore away in vehicles vowing to attack and capture nearby Gjirokaster, held by government troops. The next minute the order was countermanded, although by who it was hard to tell, and more fighters raced after the initial group to bring them back. They returned en masse, glowering and muttering. "Tomorrow," one added sheepishly.

The fragmented nature of the forces opposing President Berisha suggests that it will be nearly impossible for a compromise deal to end the crisis without fighting. Each leaderless rebel group has its own agenda and is united only by hatred of the President.

"Many people are fearful of stepping into the spotlight as a leader in case this does not succeed," said Ilirian Alia[illegible], one of the 11-man interim committee in Sarande. "Yet our choices are bleak. Either we succeed or we flee to Corfu. If we fail and remain, we shall die in the worst pogrom Albania has seen."

What began as economic discontent over the collapse of pyramid investment schemes has metamorphosed into something far more dangerous. Social discontent has catalysed with political unrest. Unless President Berisha resigns, a most unlikely event, Albania seems set to become the scene for Europe's newest war.

Europe's peace pleas fall on deaf ears in Albania

FROM TOM WALKER IN TIRANA

EUROPEAN shuttle diplomacy with Tirana began in earnest yesterday with little immediate effect, while the offer from President Berisha of Albania of a two-day amnesty for the laying down of arms cut little ice with southern rebels.

The President talked to the European Union's Dutch presidency and the lighterweight Council of Europe, but both organisations achieved little result. A clearer message reverberated from the heavily armed South. "He wants our guns, we want his head," chant the Tepelene rebels for the benefit of the television cameras.

"The situation is frozen," Rene van der Linden, the Dutch MEP who headed the council delegation, said. "The President does not seem to realise the international pressure that can be brought on Albania." Hans van Mierlo, the Dutch Foreign Minister, who headed the EU delegation, refused to comment on what the President said, referring only to "a moral obligation" for change.

Opposition politicians were not surprised at the European failure, but agreed there was little chance arms would be handed in until the President gave in to domestic and international pressure. Unlike the rebels, they have not demanded President Berisha's resignation, but they want an interim technical government, elections and a thoroughgoing investigation into the collapsed pyramid schemes.

The longer the President stalls, the more suspicious Albanians become of his motives. Rumours abound in Tirana that paramilitaries are being recruited; even that the President is recalling army units from the South, stripping them of their uniforms and sending them back as a secret civilian force.

"He expects us to sign papers asking for peace while he rearms and tricks us," Blendi Gonxha, a spokesman for the Democratic Alliance, said. Mr Gonxha tried to leave on a Swiss Air flight this week, but he was arrested by secret police at the airport and held for 17 hours. He said "They watched me all the way. I felt like Al Capone." He added: "I was advised to give up my passport."

Many in Tirana criticise the international press for referring to southern fighters as "rebels". They say that normally peaceful Albanians have had enough of a corrupt Government. But whatever the movement and whoever its leaders might be, yesterday it was still spreading.

It even looked possible that the Government's southern army base in Gjirokaster might fall. Contacted by telephone, a local teacher said women and children were on the streets with guns. As she spoke, shots could be heard in the background.

The nearby military base of Gerhot had been handed over to rebels, she said, and much of the population was armed. "You just say you're in danger and then you show your ID and they'll give you a gun," she said.

Photographs in the Italian press of the President's head of personal security with a Kalashnikov at his throat dramatically illustrated the evolving North-South divide in Albania. A fact-finding mission to the rebel-held town of Tepelene late on Thursday had gone disastrously wrong for Adem Hasu and a team of Berisha bodyguards when they were recognised at a checkpoint. The Ministry of the Interior said yesterday that their whereabouts are unknown.

Refugees escape to Italy

Rome: Seventy Albanians, including babies, crossed to Italy yesterday in two boats but coastguards said reported sightings of two other refugee vessels turned out to be false alarms. The first group crossed in a fishing boat from the Adriatic port of Vlore. A dinghy was found later and escorted to shore. Italy has vowed to repatriate all Albanians entering the country illegally.

YANNIS BEHRAKIS / REUTER

A boy holds a rifle decorated with flowers in a demonstration in Sarande yesterday

Conflict threatens city rich in history

BY NORMAN HAMMOND
ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE deployment of tanks in Gjirokaster will alarm anybody with an interest in Albania's history and culture.

Designated as a "Museum City", the birthplace of Enver Hoxha is rich in domestic architecture of the Turkish period, especially of the 18th and 19th centuries. It also has an impressive medieval castle: founded by the Byzantines as Argyrokastron some [illegible] years ago, the fortress fell to the Turks in 1418, and was garrisoned with 5,000 troops by the warlord Ali Pasha in 1812.

In spite of its tumultuous history, many fortified merchants' houses of Gjirokaster have survived in the Plaka, Hasmurat and market zones. The typical tower house has only a small doorway at ground level, with the windows and main rooms on the first and second floors.

The reception rooms, as in the Zekati House, seat of Ali Pasha's local governor, are often richly decorated with murals, carved wood and textiles, rare survivals of Albanian folk culture as it existed under Turkish occupation. The Zgendula House is an ethnographic museum, and its collection of folklore is endangered by the current unrest.

More alarming are the threats to the 18th century Xhamija e Pazarit mosque, and the two coeval churches of Shen Mehilli and Shen Sotiri.

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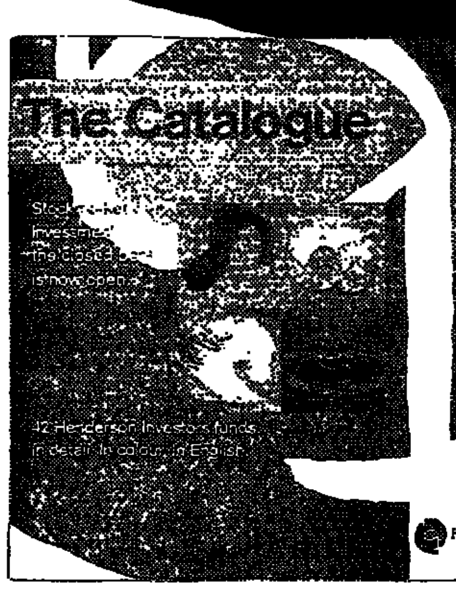
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Economy at risk if investors rethink

FROM JANET MCBRIDE
IN TIRANA

ALBANIA risks lurching from political to economic crisis if it does not swiftly end the violence in the South of the country, economists said yesterday.

Western firms that had been tempted to pump money into developing over 170 miles of Adriatic coastline and recovering oil and metal deposits may reconsider after last weekend's insurrection.

An alarming drop in consumer spending that accompanied the rise and fall of fraudulent pyramid investment schemes is also threatening domestic enterprise.

Retail sales dropped by half at the end of last year as Albanians poured their meagre savings into the pyramids. When they crumbled in January, people scrambled to exchange leks for dollars, driving the domestic currency down by up to 50 per cent.

On Friday the lek was quoted at 134-137 to the dollar on Tirana's grey, open-air currency market, compared with 104 in early January.

"The country needs to get back to a normal business environment. There are major difficulties ahead and if they are not overcome soon, the costs will be higher," said Carlos Elbirt, the World Bank's resident representative in Tirana.

"The destruction is in itself a big problem. In addition there is the question of how much damage there has been in terms of business that will not materialise."

Oil firms, including Occidental Petroleum Corp of the United States and Austria's OMV AG, have been drilling offshore. Some have also been eyeing onshore sites. Other foreign firms, mainly from Italy and Greece, have put money into producing textiles and shoes.

Analysts say events over the past two months will have done little to instil confidence abroad. But the country still has hope, because of its abundant natural resources. *(Reuter)*

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هكذا من الاطلاع

Aboriginal male artist unveiled as white woman

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

THE Australian art world swooned when they saw the work of "Aboriginal" painter Eddie Burrup, whose haunting canvases depicted Aboriginal "Dreamtime" legends.

The only trouble is, Eddie Burrup does not exist. He is a figment of the imagination of an 82-year-old white woman whose hoax has embarrassed the cognoscenti and infuriated the nation's indigenous artists. Not since Brisbane literary award winner, Helen Demidenko, admitted she fooled the publishing world in 1995 by assuming a false identity, have Australia's artistic elite been so humbled.

The elderly painter who so successfully pulled the wool over everyone's eyes, is in fact Elizabeth Durack, a pastoralist, author and amateur anthropologist who lives in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia. Under Burrup's fictitious name, she produced a range of critically acclaimed work, including paintings, photographs and even an autobiography. Everyone assumed Burrup was a recluse living a hermit's existence in the Outback.

"His" creations were so impressive that they even featured in a touring Aboriginal art show. This month some of the works were due to be entered for the highly respected Sulman Prize, to be announced on March 21. But after yesterday's revelation "Burrup's" work will almost certainly be withdrawn.

Durack, of Irish descent, is a member of one of the country's most famous pioneering families. She is a well-known painter in her own right and confessed to her deception in an arts magazine, but refused to explain her motivation. "It's my last creative phase," was all she would say.

Elizabeth Durack, a painter in her own right, has confessed to her deception, infuriating Australia's indigenous artists

However, art historian Robert Smith, a close family friend, defended her actions. "She has created a character, just as a playwright or a poet or a novelist will create a character," he said. "She hasn't appropriated any motifs or themes, or forms of Aboriginal art at all," he insisted.

Members of the Aboriginal art community were less forgiving, claiming she had stolen indigenous culture. "It's the last thing left that you could possibly take away other than our lives or shoot us all," John Mundine, an Aboriginal art curator, said. Doreen Mellor, senior curator at Flinders Art Museum in Adelaide, said: "As an Aboriginal person I feel really offended."

Ironically, the Durack family probably has a deeper knowledge of Aboriginal affairs than many other white settlers, having lived among Australia's indigenous people in Kimberley for nearly 180 years. In the last century the Duracks had a reputation as the only family of pastoralists who did not shoot Aborigines.

Nation with a gift for deflating the complacent experts

FROM DAVID BENTLEY IN BRISBANE

AUSTRALIA has a history of hoaxes, literary and artistic. The most recent is the saga of the Brisbane writer, Helen Demidenko, whose book *The Hand that Signed the Paper*, carried off Australia's prestigious Miles Franklin literary award in 1995.

Demidenko passed herself off to the judges and to the public as the offspring of a Ukrainian peasant named Markov. In reality she was the bookworm daughter of a British-born couple, Harry and Grace Darville.

Controversy surrounding the book's perceived anti-Semitism reached fever pitch when her identity was disclosed. Publishers Allen and Unwin were forced to recall copies under the nom de plume — releasing the book under Helen Darville's byline.

The event recalled the famous episode of Ern Malley, an Australian poet whose work convinced Penguin editor Max Harris in 1944 that he had stumbled on a genius. Unfortunately Malley was a figment of the collective imagination of poets James McAuley and Harold Stewart. To expose "the decay of meaning and craftsmanship in poetry", the pair compiled the Malley Poems by cutting and pasting lines at random from dictionaries, mixing them with a report on swamp drainage.

In the 1950s another literary hoaxer, John O'Grady, wrote his best-selling book, *They're a Weird Mob*, under the pseudonym Nino Culotta, apparently based on the first-person experiences of an Italian immigrant.

West Australian artist Elizabeth Durack's revelation that she used a male Aboriginal pseudonym, Eddie Burrup, has revived memories of a row over fakes passed off as the works of the late Aboriginal artist, Emily Kngwarreye.

An Emily school emerged overnight, mostly comprising family members who under Aboriginal law are entitled to paint the same stories. Forgers have made a meal of famous Australian artists such as Norman Lyndsay and Sir Arthur Streeton.

Blast on Beijing rush-hour bus leaves two dead

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

AN EXPLOSION on a crowded bus in Beijing's busy Xidan shopping district during the rush hour last night killed two passengers and injured at least eight others, Chinese sources said.

Police set up roadblocks around central Beijing and were stopping and searching cars and checking drivers' identity papers. There was no immediate confirmation that the explosion was caused by a bomb, but observers said this was the most likely cause of the blast.

Emergency workers at the Jishui Tan hospital confirmed that injured people suffering from burns had been admitted and were receiving treatment. Witnesses at the hospital said the bus had pulled up at a stop and that the blast occurred when the doors opened.

Police and local officials refused to confirm anything had occurred but said they were investigating. Beijing has seen uncharacteristic tension during the past two weeks, a period that has also seen the death and funeral of senior leader Deng Xiaoping. There have been bomb attacks in the northwest Chinese region of Xinjiang in which nine people died. Members of a separatist group of Muslim Uighurs, a Turkic-speaking minority, claimed responsibility for the blasts.

An area of northwest Beijing called Xinjiang village, where Uighurs have settled and opened several restaurants, has been the scene of heavy police surveillance over the past two weeks. Authorities were concerned that the violence could spread to Beijing.

Exiled Uighur nationalists in neighbouring Kazakhstan said they organised the Xinjiang bombings and also a similar, previously unreported attack near the Kazakh border on Monday. The separatists want to set up an independent "East Turkestan" in Xinjiang.

The Chinese capital, despite the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in 1989 and earlier student protests, is unused to terrorist violence. However, police have been on alert recently because of tensions with North Korea.

Police vans have been stationed outside the North Korean Embassy in Beijing for the past two weeks in case the North Koreans try to take a defector, Hwang Jang Yop, by force from the South Korean Consulate.

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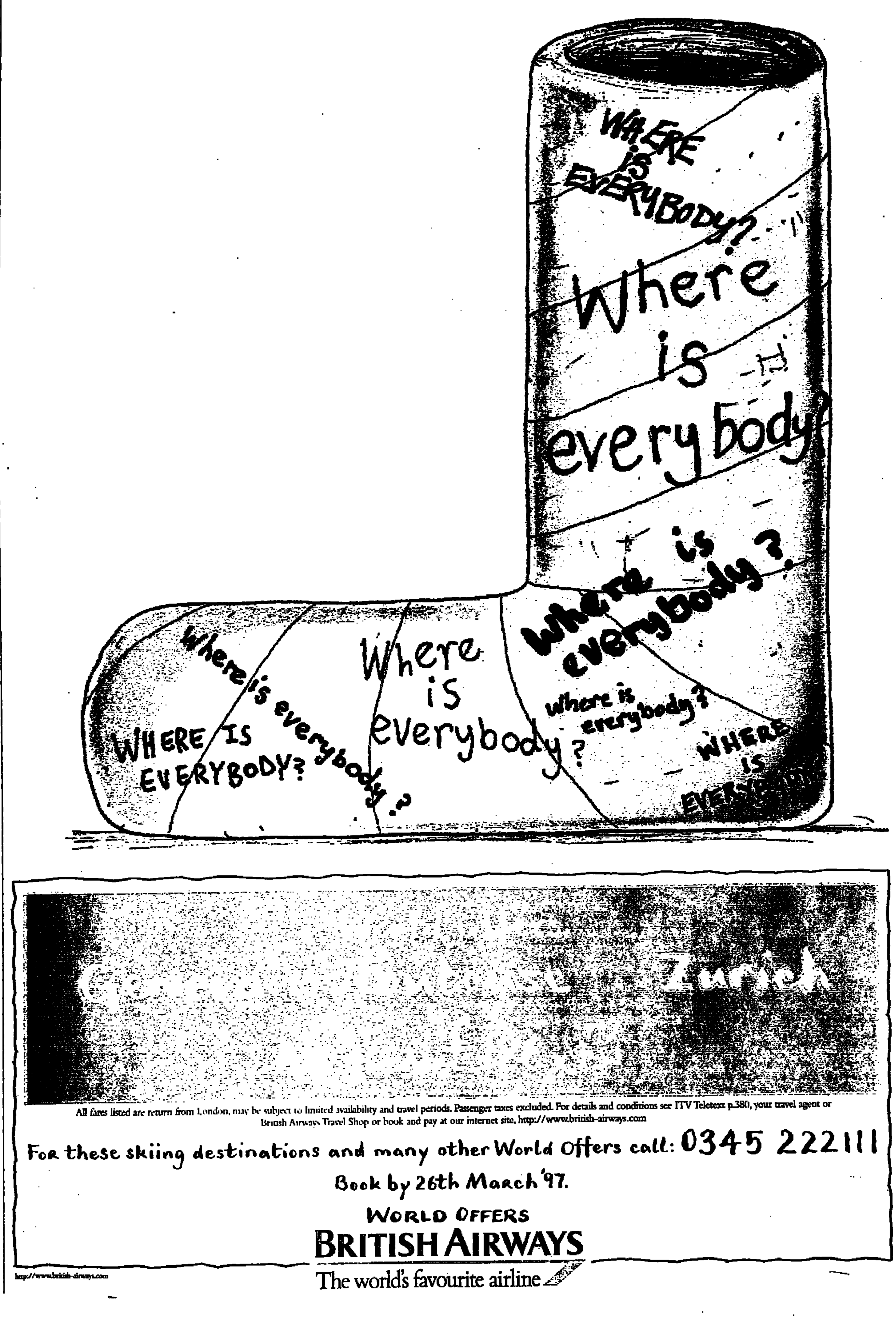

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Cash scandal undermines Gore's hopes

'You don't get a mint on the pillow in the White House, you leave one'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX
IN WASHINGTON

IT IS little comfort to President Clinton, but the allegation that he offered an overnight stay in the White House's Lincoln Bedroom to people who might give money to his campaign has spawned some of the best political jokes of his presidency. As Don Imus, the New York talk-show host, put it, in the Lincoln Bedroom "you don't get a mint on the pillow, you leave one".

The issue of questionable fundraising is casting a shadow over Mr Clinton's second term, just when the Whitewater investigations of his first term appeared to run out of steam. This week the allegations spread to Hillary Clinton and Al Gore.

A furious Mr Clinton said yesterday that he was being unfairly persecuted and distracted from implementing policies that the United States urgently needs. But his critics say that he allowed campaign donors to influence policy and that, like Richard Nixon, he has abused the presidency to secure re-election. The conservative columnist William Safire argues that "in a democracy, no official may use government power for the purpose of staying in power".

The Democrats' fundraising scramble began in 1995 after they were trounced in the midterm elections. As Mr Clinton's former senior adviser, George Stephanopoulos, says in this week's *Newsweek*, getting Mr Clinton re-elected "would take cash, tons of it, and everybody from the President on down knew it. Money became an obsession at the highest levels".

Details of both parties' fundraising became available after the election, the most expensive in American history, and congressional committees began to debate campaign finance reform. In the past month committees have dragged a series of confidential Democratic memorandums into the light, provoking headlines of "another day, another scandal".

Republicans have homed in on two specific charges. The first is relatively clear-cut: that the Democratic National Committee illegally accepted foreign money. The committee admits it did take cash from Asian companies and businessmen, but says that it was unaware of the donors' identities. It has returned the cash, amounting to more than $2 million (£1.2 million).

The second charge, that Democrats illegally used federal buildings, including the White House, for political fundraising is muddier. Vice-President Gore admitted that he made campaign calls from his White House telephone, but says he paid for them with a Democratic National Committee credit card. Legal commentators point out that some laws which Republicans say he breached predate the invention of the telephone.

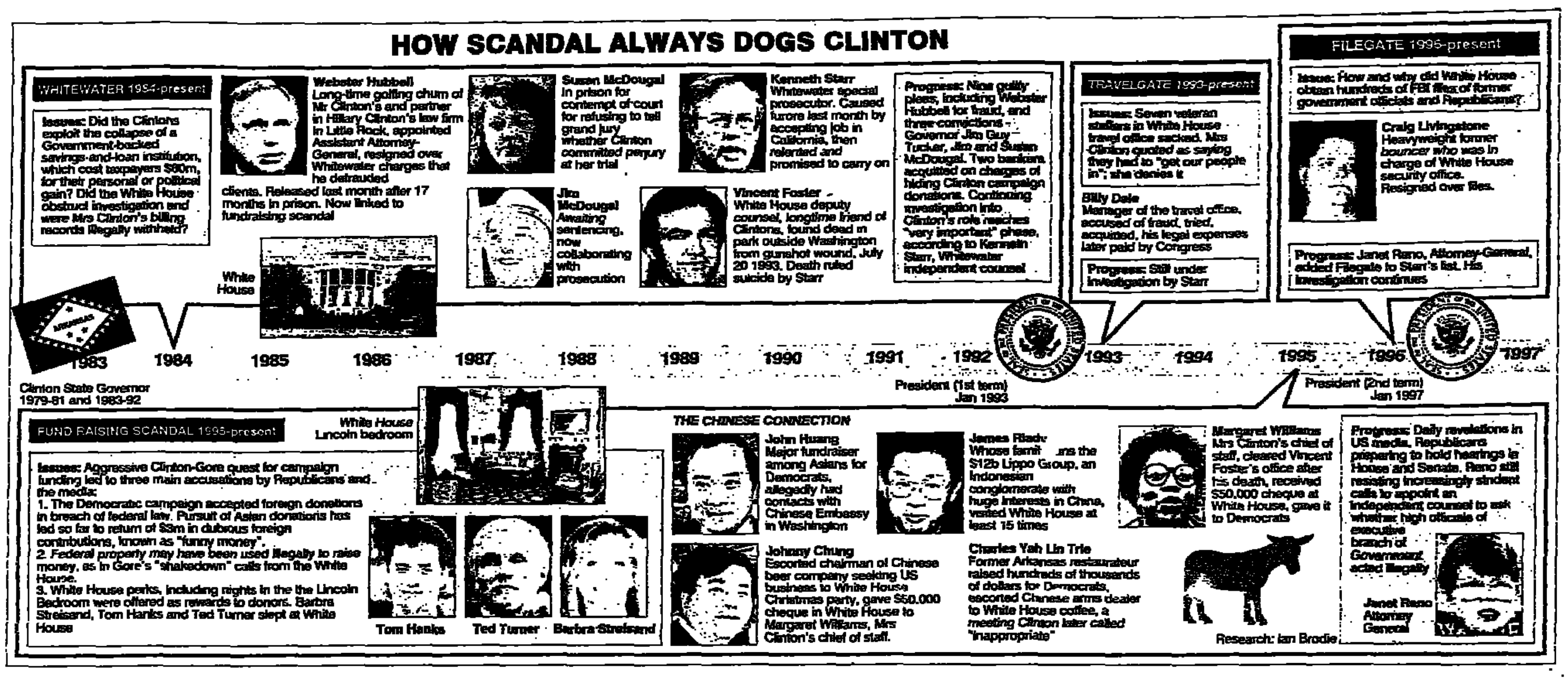
In themselves, these charges of illegality do not amount to a Watergate, nor have they gripped the public imagination like Nixon's midnight burglary. But they have the power to damage Mr Clinton and the Democratic Party because they may prompt more investigations. The clamour for Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, to appoint an independent counsel is growing. The Senate is also likely to vote next week on whether to give Republican Senator Fred Thompson $6 million to conduct a separate investigation.

Even more important, the specific charges implicitly raise wider issues which potentially have the gravity of Watergate. One question is whether Mr Clinton allowed his courtship of donors to influence policy.

At a time of tension between America and China, his Chinese contacts have aroused much concern. It emerged this week that Webster Hubbell, a friend of Mr Clinton convicted of Whitewater charges, received a payment by Chinese property developers at the same time as the Administration approved US participation in the development.

The second serious question is whether, as Mr Safire argues, Mr Clinton abused the presidency to keep himself in office. It is not illegal for the President to book guests into the Lincoln Bedroom or to give tycoons coffee in the White House. But the stories depict a President well aware of the commercial value of his office and, to many, that leaves an unpleasant aftertaste.

So far the dispute has not dented Mr Clinton's public approval ratings. But it has associated Mr Gore with the President's least attractive characteristics and has severely weakened the Democrats' future ability to raise funds. Even if the row continues to fall short of Watergate in gravity or resonance, it could destroy Mr Gore's hopes that he will occupy the White House in 2000.



HOW SCANDAL ALWAYS DOGS CLINTON

WHITEWATER 1984-present

Issues: Did the Clintons exploit the collapse of a Government-backed savings-and-loan institution, which cost taxpayers $60m, for their personal or political gain? Did the White House obstruct investigation and were Mrs Clinton's billing records illegally withheld?

Webster Hubbell Long-time golfing chum of Mr Clinton's and partner in Hillary Clinton's law firm in Little Rock, appointed Assistant Attorney-General, resigned over Whitewater charges that he defrauded clients. Released last month after 17 months in prison. Now linked to fundraising scandal

Susan McDougal In prison for contempt of court for refusing to tell grand jury whether Clinton committed perjury at her trial

Jim McDougal Awaiting sentencing, now collaborating with prosecution

Kenneth Starr Whitewater special prosecutor. Caused furore last month by accepting job in California, then relented and promised to carry on

Vincent Foster - White House deputy counsel, longtime friend of Clintons, found dead in park outside Washington from gunshot wound, July 20 1993. Death ruled suicide by Starr

Progress: Nine guilty pleas, including Webster Hubbell for fraud, and three convictions - Governor Jim Guy Tucker, Jim and Susan McDougal. Two bankers acquitted on charges of hiding Clinton campaign donations. Continuing investigation into Clinton's role reaches "very important" phase, according to Kenneth Starr, Whitewater independent counsel

TRAVELGATE 1993-present

Issues: Seven veteran staffers in White House travel office sacked. Mrs Clinton quoted as saying they had to "get our people in"; she denies it

Billy Dale Manager of the travel office, accused of fraud, tried, acquitted, his legal expenses later paid by Congress

Progress: Still under investigation by Starr

FILEGATE 1995-present

Issue: How and why did White House obtain hundreds of FBI files of former government officials and Republicans?

Craig Livingstone Heavyweight former bouncer who was in charge of White House security office. Resigned over files.

Progress: Janet Reno, Attorney-General, added Filegate to Starr's list. His investigation continues

Clinton State Governor 1979-81 and 1983-92

President (1st term) Jan 1993

President (2nd term) Jan 1997

FUND RAISING SCANDAL 1995-present

Issues: Aggressive Clinton-Gore quest for campaign funding led to three main accusations by Republicans and the media:
1. The Democratic campaign accepted foreign donations in breach of federal law. Pursuit of Asian donations has led so far to return of $3m in dubious foreign contributions, known as "funny money".
2. Federal property may have been used illegally to raise money, as in Gore's "shakedown" calls from the White House.
3. White House perks, including nights in the the Lincoln Bedroom were offered as rewards to donors. Barbra Streisand, Tom Hanks and Ted Turner slept at White House

THE CHINESE CONNECTION

John Huang Major fundraiser among Asians for Democrats, allegedly had contacts with Chinese Embassy in Washington

James Riady Whose family owns the $12b Lippo Group, an Indonesian conglomerate with huge interests in China, visited White House at least 15 times

Johnny Chung Escorted chairman of Chinese beer company seeking US business to White House Christmas party, gave $50,000 cheque in White House to Margaret Williams, Mrs Clinton's chief of staff.

Charles Yah Lin Trie Former Arkansas restaurateur raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Democrats, escorted Chinese arms dealer to White House coffee, a meeting Clinton later called "inappropriate"

Margaret Williams Mrs Clinton's chief of staff, cleared Vincent Foster's office after his death, received $50,000 cheque at White House, gave it to Democrats

Progress: Daily revelations in US media. Republicans preparing to hold hearings in House and Senate. Reno still resisting increasingly strident calls to appoint an independent counsel to ask whether high officials of executive branch of Government acted illegally

Research: Ian Brodie

'Irregularities' cost UN millions

New York: The United Nations Development Programme has suspended two staff members and is investigating 14 others after the discovery that it overpaid by as much as $6 million (£3.7 million) for the construction of premises in developing countries over the last eight years (James Bone writes).

Gustave Speth, the agency's head, said the overspending appeared to stem from "irregularities" and "failures" in the organisation's financial controls, particularly in contracting with outside parties. The countries involved were Zambia, Uganda, Maldives, Ghana, Mozambique, Comoros, São Tomè, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. Mr Speth said the agency would take appropriate action.

Saddam's son says Iranians shot him

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

UDAY, the elder son of Saddam Hussein, has blamed Iran for the armed attack on him last year, saying he saw his assailants and could tell they were not Arabs.

"They looked different. Arabs have beards like mine. Iranians have longer beards. In general we can differentiate clearly between Arabs and Iranians," he told CNN in his first interview to Western television since he was shot. He said time had shown that Iran was involved in such incidents, which had occurred elsewhere in the region.

"We make the connection between the eight-year war we waged with them and betrayal and backstabbing since the birth of Islam," he added.

Blaming Iran publicly suggests that Saddam has decided to go on the offensive against Iran in an attempt to show solidarity with neighbouring Arab Gulf countries that have broken relations with Iraq but also accuse Iran of stirring up trouble.

Uday, reported to be unable to walk and with a bullet lodged in his spine, said he was alone in his car at the time of the close-range attack. Earlier reports said bodyguards were with him and that at least one was killed.

He said he was hit many times in various parts of the body, but he was recovering. Iraqi and French doctors would operate on him shortly. Waving his hand, he denied that he was paralysed, and said there was a "good chance" that he would be able to play sports again.

He rejected as "baseless reports" by ignorant people rumours that members of his family had been involved in the attack. A committee investigating it would report shortly, he said. But it had not been easy for Iraqi security to get information, as the operation had been precisely planned.

He refused to answer a question about his position of power in Iraq, and said any Iraqi who had asked such a question would be punished. He emphasised his loyalty to his father, who, he said, "has always put us in the same position as the ordinary Iraqi".

Rome minister attacks 'rent a womb' woman expecting twins

Bilotta: supervised implant

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS
IN ROME

AN ITALIAN woman has lent her womb to two infertile couples and is expected to give birth in September to twins she will never see, doctors said yesterday.

"I am lending my body to make other families happy," said Angela, a Rome shopkeeper who is 12 weeks pregnant, asking that her surname not be made public. The embryonic engineering experiment is believed to be the first of its kind in the world. It was immediately condemned by the Roman Catholic Church and the Italian Government.

"This episode, like others that have come to light recently, poses the question of urgent legislation to regulate both cloning and assisted fertilisation," Rosy Bindi, the Italian Health Minister, said. The Rev Gino Concetti, a leading Catholic theologian, said: "This is a new step towards the madness of assisted procreation."

Angela became pregnant with the twins after embryos from the two couples were implanted in her in Switzerland by Swiss doctors under the supervision of a Rome gynaecologist, Dr Pasquale Bilotta. In Italy such embryonic meddling is illegal.

The women in the two couples "borrowing" Angela's womb were unable to become pregnant for medical reasons. One is aged 27 and had her womb and an ovary removed after haemorrhaging. The other, 32, has a heart condition.

"I know how beautiful it is to be a mother," said Angela, who has two children of her own. "Even someone who cannot become pregnant should be able to experience being a mother," she told *Il Messaggero*. Asked if she considered the babies she was expecting as being her own children, she replied: "A little yes and a little no." She and her husband had taken together the decision to lend her womb. She said that she was a practising Catholic, but feels that her conscience is clear.

Dr Bilotta hit headlines two years ago when he arranged for a baby to be born after the death of her mother by using frozen embryos.

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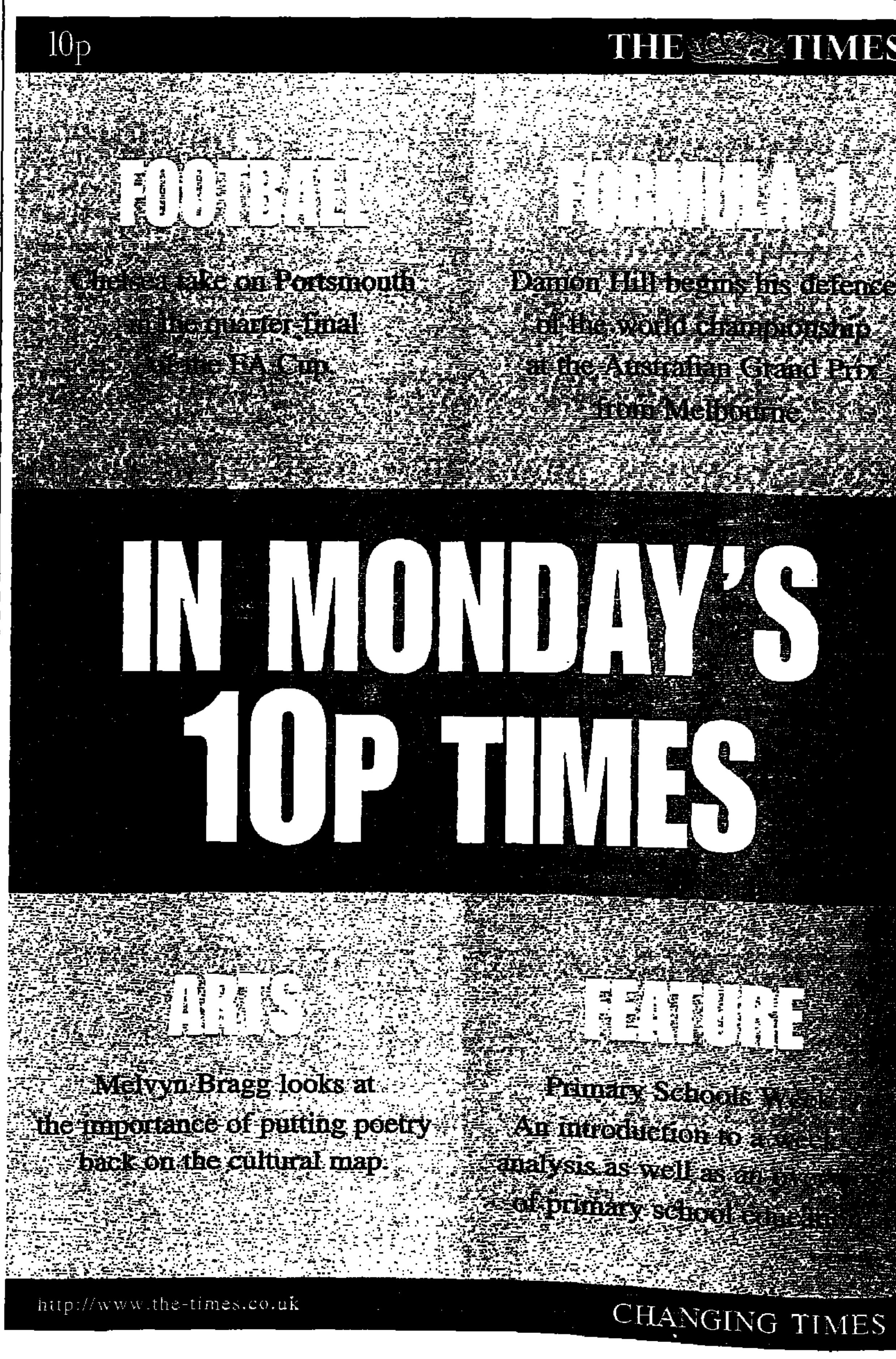

10p THE TIMES

FOOTBALL
Chelsea take on Portsmouth in the quarter-final of the FA Cup

FORMULA 1
Damon Hill begins his defence of the world championship at the Australian Grand Prix from Melbourne

IN MONDAY'S 10P TIMES

ARTS
Melvyn Bragg looks at the importance of putting poetry back on the cultural map

FEATURE
Primary Schools [illegible] An introduction to [illegible] analysis as well as [illegible] of primary school [illegible]

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CHANGING TIMES

هكذا من الاعلام

هكذا من الاعلام

Life for Austrian 'black widow' who killed lonely hearts

BY ROGER BOYES

AUSTRIA'S "Black Widow" serial killer was jailed for life yesterday after a jury, arguing until the early hours, found her guilty of murder in a specimen case.

Elfriede Blauensteiner, a matronly 66-year-old, gained her nickname because, like many female spiders, she killed her mates. At least five well-off pensioners, usually contacted through a lonely hearts' column, fell victim to her lethal brew of diabetic medicine and anti-depressants mixed with bedtime hot chocolate.

The specimen case was of Alois Pichler, a 77-year-old former postmaster. His lonely hearts' advertisement suggested that he was lonely and well-off, and Blauensteiner moved in with him soon after their first contact.

Two weeks later the man who had never been seriously ill before, fell into a coma. Two months later he was dead. Before his death his will had been changed in Blauensteiner's favour.

The dead man's nephew was suspicious and demanded an autopsy, at which it was discovered that Pichler died of heart failure brought on by large doses of Euglucon, a medicine for diabetics.

Four months before meeting Pichler, Blauensteiner had buried her previous partner, a rich pensioner, Friedrich Doecker. Police investigated his case as well as her previous companions and discovered that she had left a trail of death. Her accomplice in the Pichler case was Harald Schmidt, a lawyer who helped to change the wills. He was imprisoned yesterday for seven years.

> ❛ Widow, early sixties, would like to share the quiet autumn of her life with a widower ❜

Blauensteiner was a familiar figure in the casino in Baden, a short drive outside Vienna, where she played roulette, blackjack and slot machines. But the defence offered deeper psychological reasons, claiming that she was driven by a hatred of poverty and men. Her father died on the Russian front and she grew up with six brothers and sisters in a one-room Vienna flat. The only possibility of escape seemed to be marriage, but her first husband deserted her after the birth of their daughter.

"Since then," she told the court, "I have hated men." Her lonely hearts advertisements failed to mention this. Her typical entry was: "Widow, early sixties, 1.65 metres, would like to share the quiet autumn of her life with a widower. I am a housewife, gardener, nurse, and a faithful companion."

She confessed to at least five murders, but later withdrew the admissions. Of her first victim, she said: "I freed him from his pain." The second, a railway executive, poisoned over a period of six years, "deserved to die".

The Black Widow — who wore black in court yesterday — departed briefly from her pattern by poisoning a female neighbour in 1992. "She was ill and was suffering," said Blauensteiner, who ensured that the woman's will was altered in her favour. At least three other male victims, including Pichler, followed.

Blauensteiner collected more than £1.2 million in inherited property and cash. Her lifestyle was that of a rich woman: generous tips, flashy restaurants and expensive fur coats.

After 12 hours of deliberation, ending at 3 am, the eight-member jury in Krems, west of Vienna, decided that she had been motivated by "pure greed". Blauensteiner was described by the police as "cold as ice". When asked if she understood the sentence, she said defiantly: "I understand perfectly."

The court had been told that she arrived late at Pichler's funeral, threw a red rose on the coffin and said: "Adieu Alois".

On the way back from the cemetery, on the back of the obituary notice, she scribbled the draft of a new lonely hearts' ad: "Widow, living alone, early sixties, car driver, attractive, seeks civil servant."

Elfriede Blauensteiner is led into court early yesterday to be sentenced for one specimen murder charge

Fishing threat to wildlife haven

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

INDUSTRIAL fishing fleets have begun plundering the inshore waters around the world's most famous wildlife haven in a development that poses a dangerous threat to the unique Galápagos Islands wildlife.

Researchers said yesterday that tuna ships from Japan, the Ecuadorean mainland, Taiwan, North America and elsewhere were hoovering up fish stocks near the shore in defiance of the law. The fish, many of which are being discovered to be unique and found nowhere else in the world, are vital food sources for the islands' famous penguins and birds, including the red, blue and masked boobies.

Scientists, speaking in London, said that other disturbing developments were also emerging, including a sharp rise in the number of sealions being slaughtered for their penises. "They are being sold as aphrodisiacs to the Far East ... and the sealions' meat is being used as bait to catch sharks. These are being killed in increasing numbers, with their fins sold for sharkfin soup to the Far East and to communities on the Pacific coast of America," Dr Jack Grove, a scientist and expert of more than 20 years' experience in the islands, said.

Dr Grove, speaking at a meeting of the Galápagos Conservation Trust, said urgent international pressure was needed to save the rare and unique fish, sharks and other marine life. He said that the overfishing was part of a worldwide problem. But the value of the islands, in terms of their beauty and wildlife, should outweigh quick profits.

He added that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, based in Switzerland, was considering listing the Galápagos as "a World Heritage Site in peril".

Dr Grove, a member of Conservation Network and research associate in fish at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, said that the islands' wildlife, including giant tortoises and iguanas, were well known, but much of the marine life was emerging as unique. Many fish, like the land animals, appeared unafraid of man, he added, and were easy to catch and kill.

Emma Ridley, a guide with the Galápagos National Park, said yesterday that local laws allowed fishing by people living in the islands, but now they were witnessing uncontrolled spear-fishing and industrial fishing.

ARDEA

Galápagos sealions at Hood Island

Yeltsin puts top aide in charge of reform

BY RICHARD BEESTON AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday appointed Anatoli Chubais, his powerful Chief of Staff, as First Deputy Prime Minister. The free-marketeer will be entrusted with the task of leading Russia's new drive for economic reform.

His appointment, made by the President's office, came as politicians waited in suspense for Mr Yeltsin's sweeping Cabinet reshuffle, which some fear could turn into a purge. Mr Chubais, who will serve under Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, held the same post until he was ousted last year. He later masterminded Mr Yeltsin's landslide election victory.

The appointment came a day after Mr Yeltsin promised sweeping changes to clean up a Government he accused of being "corrupt".

Mr Chubais is seen in the West as a dedicated devotee of the free market but he is vilified by the Opposition. Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader, said: "We will not obey orders from Chubais, no matter what his position."

□ **Chechnya amnesty:** The Duma, swallowing wounded pride over defeat in Chechnya, voted to give an amnesty to Chechen fighters in a bid to win freedom for Russian prisoners of war. *(Reuter)*

WORLD SUMMARY

Trial faces lover of Aids Briton

London: Greek Cypriot authorities are to prosecute a local fisherman who allegedly infected a British woman holidaymaker with Aids while he knew he was a carrier (Frances Gibb writes).

The Attorney-General, Alexander Markides, said yesterday that criminal charges would be brought against Paul Georgiou for passing the disease to Janette Pink, 39, a mother-of-two from Basildon, Essex.

Basque cleared

Madrid: Spain's fragile jury system has come under attack after a jury in San Sebastián found a young Basque radical not guilty of the murder of two policemen, even after he confessed to taking "deliberate aim" and shooting the two men (Tunku Varadarajan writes). The jury said he "was not fully in control of himself" at the time of the shooting.

Israeli pullout

Jerusalem: Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, yesterday narrowly overcame right-wing opposition to secure Cabinet approval for withdrawing troops from 9 per cent more of the occupied West Bank (Christopher Walker writes). The decision was promptly denounced by the Palestinians, who had expected 30 per cent.

Belgians' plea

Brussels: The family of the latest Belgian girl found murdered appealed for calm after youths rioted over police incompetence. The remains of Loubna Benaissa, nine, were found at a garage five years after she vanished. Patrick Derochette, a sex offender working at the garage, has reportedly confessed to raping and murdering her. *(AP)*

Manley dies at 72

Kingston: Michael Manley, the former Prime Minister of Jamaica, a legendary figure in Caribbean politics and a leader of Third World causes, has died of prostate cancer. He was 72. *(Reuter)*

Obituary, page 23

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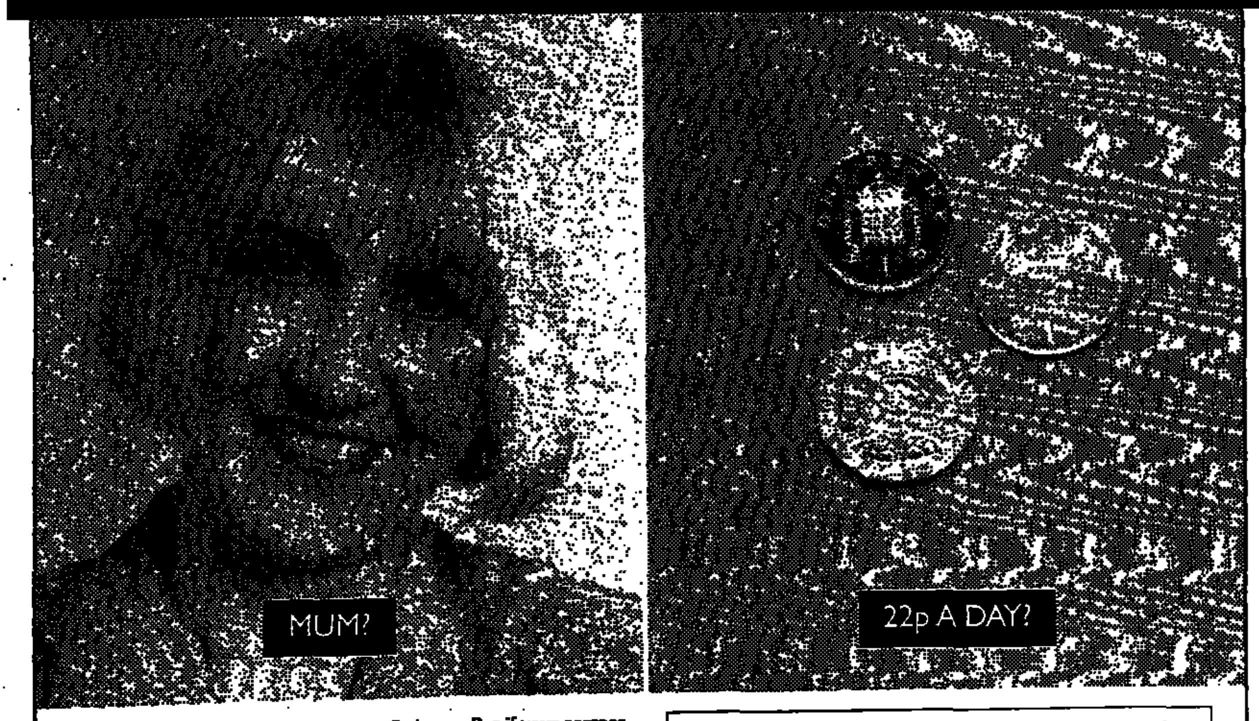

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Former British school teacher earns respect by keeping noisy band of leftwingers in order

Classroom tactics rule

BRUSSELS FILE
by CHARLES BREMNER

IN GALLIC governing circles, one of the sharpest putdowns is to accuse someone of failing to "know his dossier". Disgruntled Euro-leftwingers are levelling that charge these days against the formidable Englishwoman who holds the second most powerful post in the European Parliament.

Pauline Green, Labour MEP for North London, who leads the European Socialists, the biggest bloc in the European assembly, upset the French, Belgians and Italians in her flock with the way she whipped them into line in a move to rebuke the Commission for its handling of the BSE crisis. "It was almost Stalinist," a French Socialist said, still smarting from Mrs Green's efforts to drive through a middle course that in the end saved Jacques Santer and his colleagues from a censure vote that could have had them dismissed. The bout of parliamentary arm-twisting was all in a day's work for the brisk Mrs Green, 48, a former Metropolitan policewoman and school teacher, who has earned respect, if not affection, from her motley army of 213 leftwingers, who range from Scottish Old Labourites and Glenys Kinnock to German party barons and six French former Cabinet ministers. Mrs Green was picked as leader in 1994 after Britain elected 65 Labour MEPs, making them the biggest single-party bloc in the assembly that works in Brussels and Strasbourg. The Parliament's only post with a higher profile is that of its president, José-Maria Gil Robles.

Although almost unknown in Britain, where she is a leading figure in the Co-operative movement, Mrs Green cuts an imposing figure in the halls of Europower. Her 15-nation group has real clout in the business of legislation. "Pauline is happy walking towards the sound of gunfire," a lieutenant says. "She is not averse to throwing her weight around." Mrs Green's forthright manner has unbalanced many a Eurocrat. In one sortie last month, she laid into Mr Santer for his "shambolic" management of the mad cow affair and told him he had nine months to "put your house in order". She dismissed Douglas Hogg as "Britain's hapless Agriculture Minister".

A mother of two and wife of a London police commander, the monolingual Mrs Green has made her name as an old-style party manager and deal-maker. As such, she has earned the respect of her rival, the cerebral Elisabeth Guigou, who led France's Maastricht negotiations as a minister under the late President Mitterrand.

Mrs Green's toughest challenge has been to lead a largely Europhile bloc while staying clear of the EU minefield in British politics and keeping her Labour battalion in line. The Euro-Labour Party fell foul of Tony Blair in 1995 when about three dozen unreformed MEPs signed a petition to keep the party's old Clause Four. But the pair now consult once a month and Mr Blair is said to recognise that the tough MEP will be an asset if Labour gains power.

SABINE PALM / REUTER

Pauline Green receives roses after being elected leader of the Socialists in the European Parliament

Euro-drivers in a jam

ANOTHER Briton has just been elevated to high office in the European Parliament, just in time to tackle another Belgian car feud. Julian Priestley, 46, who has spent his whole career in the halls of Euro-power, has taken over as secretary-general, or administrator, of the itinerant assembly.

His immediate difficulty is to settle a dispute with the Brussels authorities over parking places at the Parliament's gleaming new £600 million seat. It is equipped with underground parking for the cars of nearly 3,000 MEPs and their attendants. But, to acclaim from local residents, the Belgians have banned the Euro-people from using more than a third of the slots because they fear traffic jams in the nearby streets.

Old foes join forces over jobs

THERE has never been much love lost between Belgium and its big southern neighbour, but the decision by Renault last week to close its Belgian car factory at Vilvoorde, in the Brussels suburbs, has triggered a spasm of anti-French fury. The chief target is Louis Schweitzer, the French civil servant who became boss of the motor firm in 1992.

M Schweitzer could hardly have done better if he had set out to turn himself into the most reviled villain outside jail. By announcing the imminent loss of about 4,000 jobs, including those of suppliers, he united the Walloons and Flemings.

Nobody apparently had told Renault's *grand patron* that Vilvoorde was home to Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Prime Minister. Flemish newspapers distributed the portrait of the owlish former inspector of finances stamped with the word *hartelos* ("heartless"). A new joke is doing the rounds: How many Frenchmen can fit in a Clio? Just one. The other three seats are needed for his "*complexe de superiorité*".

Renault workers stage strikes

From Ben Macintyre
in Paris

IN AN unprecedented trans-European strike, Renault workers yesterday staged simultaneous stoppages in France, Belgium and Spain to protest against the car maker's decision to close its factory at Vilvoorde in Belgium and cut 6,000 jobs.

Despite union fury and a storm of criticism from French politicians and the European Commission, Louis Schweitzer, the Renault chairman, insisted that the closure of the Belgian factory in July with the loss of 3,100 jobs was traumatic but necessary. "It's a brutal, hard and painful decision," M Schweitzer said. "If we do nothing, the company will die."

Up to one third of workers downed tools for one hour during each shift in Paris and other parts of France, while Belgian demonstrators from the threatened Vilvoorde plant massed outside the French Embassy in Brussels and threw a car chassis across police barricades. Belgian Renault dealers across the country joined the protest by shutting up shop.

Schweitzer: concedes decision is brutal

The Renault board has approved a plan to shed an additional 2,764 jobs in France, where stoppages began overnight at the Renault factory in Le Mans, and continued yesterday at plants in Cleon, Sandouville and Douai.

About 90 per cent of workers at four Renault plants in Spain downed tools for one hour and employees at factories operated in Belgium by General Motors, Volkswagen, Ford, Opel and Volvo also staged one-hour strikes in solidarity with their Renault counterparts.

Workers at Renault plants in Portugal, however, did not respond to the strike call.

Union leaders last night hailed the so-called "Euro-strike" as proof of cross-border workers' unity in the face of glaring gaps in European social legislation.

M Schweitzer suggested that a new use might be found for the Vilvoorde factory and that some workers may be transferred to other plants, but he showed no sign of backing off from the radical restructuring plan.

Critics claim that he is callously taking advantage of different labour costs across Europe, and on Thursday Karl Van Miert, the European Commissioner, announced he was blocking Spanish investment subsidies for Renault on the grounds that it was "absurd" to close the profitable Belgian plant.

The Spanish Government yesterday decided to suspend its request for approval of an £8 million subsidy it had planned to provide for a Renault investment in Valladolid.

The management of the newly-privatised French automaker claims that the Vilvoorde plant was singled out because it has the highest production costs.

While President Chirac of France has expressed "shock" at the abrupt way the closure was announced, as M Schweitzer pointed out "the French Government has not said that the decision should be altered, corrected or that it was not good for the company".

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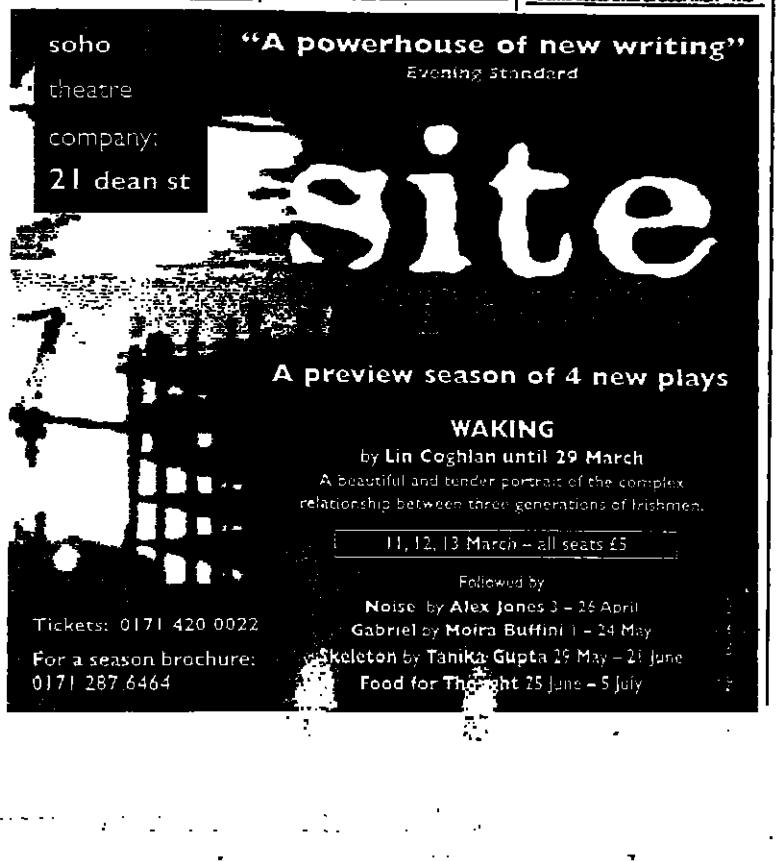

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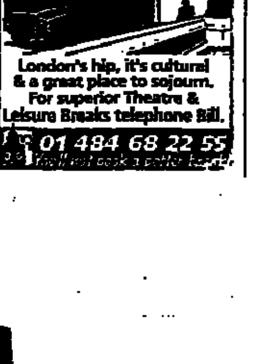

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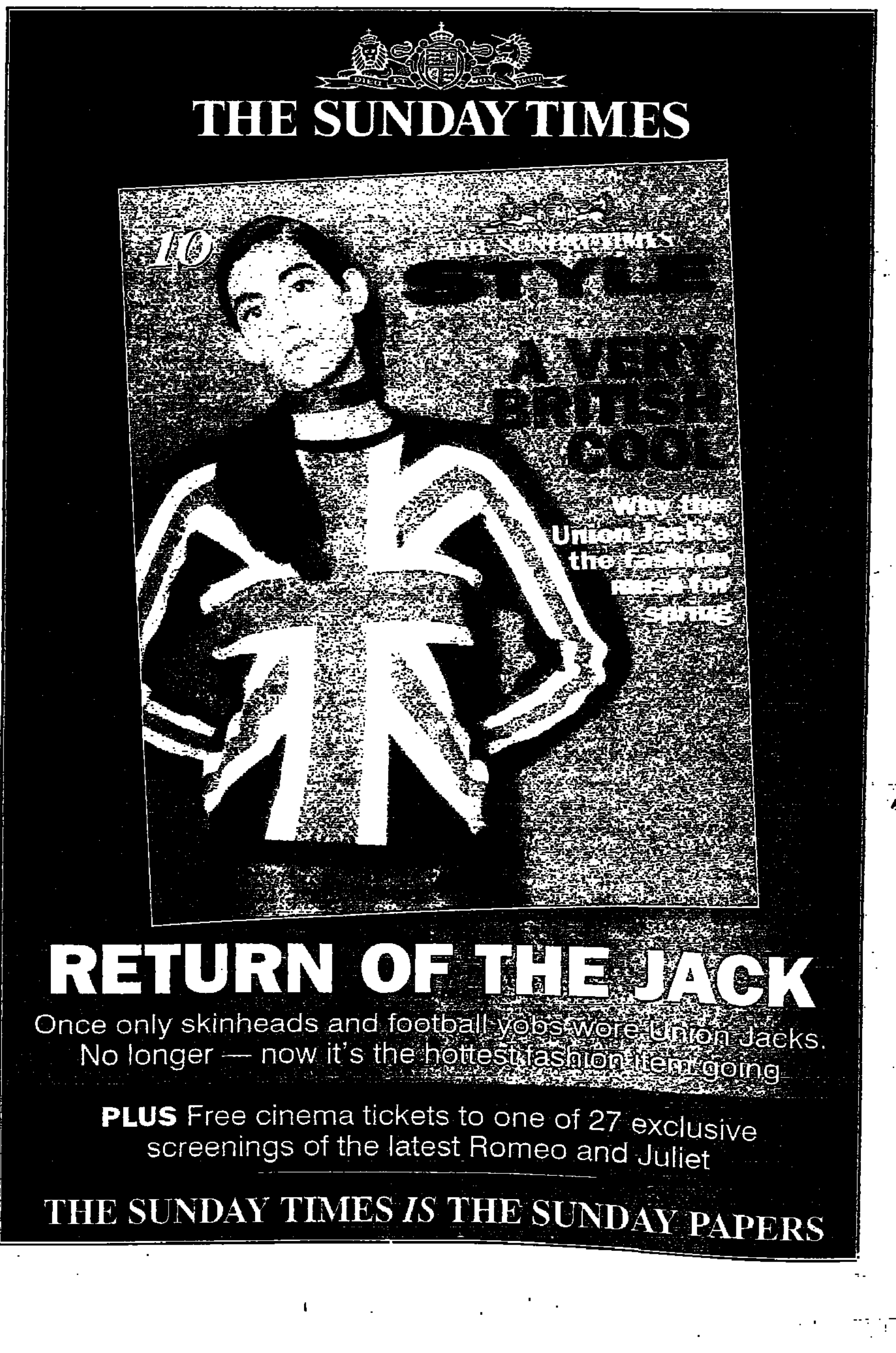

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■ OPINION

The French are so proud of their blue movies that they are mounting a festival of them in London

■ VISUAL ART

Welsh National Opera's staging of *Iphigénie en Tauride* is about as good as it gets

THE TIMES ARTS

■ THEATRE

Widows sees Ariel Dorfman returning to the same harrowing themes as in *Death and the Maiden*

■ ON MONDAY

In Stratford an epic production of *The Mysteries* hits the stage: read Benedict Nightingale's view

First shots in a rumpy-pumpy war

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

When it comes to moaning about malign foreign influences on their culture, the French are *universally* acclaimed as world champions. Nothing makes hackles rise faster in Paris than the suspicion that *les Anglais* have concocted a dastardly plan to infiltrate the French language with hundreds of English words, or that Hollywood's secret agenda is to steamroller the French film industry to oblivion.

But now the French are hitting back. What's more, they are deploying a weapon so potent that it could rock the very foundations of British society. Yes, it's sex.

Every country makes sex films. Everyone has watched them at some time or another. (Oh all right, Virginia, you haven't.) But the French believe that theirs are a cut above the rest. Other nations produce blue movies. The French make "erotic masterpieces". And this week, to prove the point, they launched a huge official festival of their erotica right in the heart of London. The ultra-respectable Institut Français, the French Government's cultural outpost in Britain, is to show 50 of "the most subversive films ever made in France or financed by French money — the forbidden fruit of French cinema".

Never before have so many Gallic gropes, so many frolics *françaises*, been unleashed in quick succession on innocent British sensibilities. Our stiff upper lips may never recover. *Mon Dieu*, even as I type *les titres* my fingers are trembling. Here is the ravishing Bardot in Vadim's *Et Dieu créa la femme*, and another eternal heart-throb, Jeanne Moreau, in Malle's *Les Amants*, now 40 years old but still censored on British videos. The naughty old Institut Français is showing it uncut on Monday.

Here is Buñuel's *L'Age d'or*, banned for 50 years, and his *Belle de Jour*. How many schoolboys of the 1960s scraped through O-level French by slipping illicitly into that fantasy-laden classic and making a close study of Catherine Deneuve's exquisite vowels?

And if that's too arty for your taste there's also *Emmanuelle* — complete with that epic scene of ingenious if improbable rumpy-pumpy in an aircraft loo — and the British premiere of the 1975 sensation, *Histoire d'O*, which is apparently *so* shocking that the French have never dared let it cross *la Manche* before, in case it gives us ideas. And if you think this is old hat, the Institut is also screening "erotic vignettes" of the 1990s.

Clearly, this is the first shot in a cultural war. The French have flung down the gauntlet, and indeed the rest of their clothing. Their film industry is obviously over-sexed, over-subsidised and over here. Our own British Council must retaliate. Hire the best filmhouse in Paris, chaps. Round up the sauciest *oeuvres* in British cinema. Shall we say *Confessions of a Window Cleaner* and *Carry On Nurse* for starters? Let's show our continental friends that, if it comes to serious action on the dirty-mac front, the British are quite capable of holding their own.

And on the subject of highbrow cultural exchanges, are you up to speed on this year's Eurovision Song Contest? Readers of *The Times* — sophisticated, mature individuals, on the whole — perhaps may not be aware that Britain's participation in this venerable joust has reached something of a crisis point. We used to win the thing quite often. Now we haven't won for years.

To make matters worse, the Irish and Norwegians (unlikely victors in recent years) have changed the rules. In the old days, it was either a belter year or a shaker year. If it was a belter year, some glass-shattering, gurgling, gargling sub-Piaf waif from France or Luxembourg would win with a throbbing, adenoidal ballad. If it was a shaker year, Britain's entry — comprising one or more micro-skirted lovelies, frantically wobbling all available protuberances — would triumph.

But the Norwegians and Irish cheated. They introduced proper melodies. Not fair! Since when was music allowed in the Eurovision? The British panicked. Two years ago, we tried to regain the initiative by going all trendy with a rap song. It was a dismal flop, naturally. The Eurovision is about as closely attuned to contemporary pop as Dame Barbara Cartland is to sumo-wrestling.

So last year we reverted to the palpitating leggy-lovely formula, and put forward a more-or-less undressed young damsel called Gina G in a breathy little number called *Ooh, Aah (Just a Little Bit)*. (Second line: "Ooh, aah, just a little *bit more*". You get the drift!) Mysteriously, this intellectually bracing material got ooh, aah, just nowhere with the hard-hearted juries of Europe.

Now we are trying a new strategy. It's called satire. Tomorrow, BBC TV viewers will vote on which song represents Britain this year. The favourite is a number called *Yodel in the Canyon of Love*. And if you think that title is the ultimate in daftness, you haven't heard the song itself. It's a brilliantly barmy item; quite possibly brilliant and barmy enough, in fact, to unite Europe in a single glorious cry of "douze points!"

But if Europe decides that it doesn't care for *Yodel in the Canyon of Love* — and let's face it, the title might lose something in translation to Estonian — then we can say that we only entered the song as a joke anyway. Perfect! We either win the big prize, or we ridicule the whole set-up. Bit like the Maastricht treaty, really.

THEATRE: **Benedict Nightingale** on Ariel Dorfman's fearful *Widows*

Waiting for tears

Atrocities occur. The tyrants responsible are forced from power. But the new government is insecure, dependent on the goodwill of the army, or maybe influenced by infiltrators from the former regime. How is it to deal with the wrongdoers who still walk the streets and punish the crimes that poison the national soul? They are questions that have yet to be fully answered in parts of Eastern Europe and Latin America. They continue to obsess the Chilean dramatist Ariel Dorfman.

Hence his masterpiece, *Death and the Maiden*, in which a woman takes revenge on the doctor she believes oversaw her torture and rape. But that postdates his treatment of much the same theme in *Widows*, which was a novel in 1978 and a not-too-satisfactory play by 1988. Only now, after a collaboration with the American dramatist Tony Kushner, followed by yet more slog by Dorfman himself, is a definitive *Widows* ready to be taken on tour by Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre. Was it worth the struggle?

I thought so the moment the lights went up at Cambridge's Arts Theatre on a viaduct overhanging a river on whose bank some ten women in black were gathered, looking like a chorus from Aeschylus or Lorca; and I still thought so at the end. By then, Dorfman had given his answer to the question posed by the mothers, wives and daughters of men abducted by authorities who now ask for rapprochement and the spirit of forgive-and-forget. Before anything so chummy can occur the village's male population must be returned, alive or dead, and the killers must be punished. Nothing else will do.

The speaker is Edith Macarthur's Sofia, whose father, husband and two sons have disappeared. She sits by the river grimly awaiting their return and regarded by the other women as "stubborn, bitter, a tombstone" and a potential provocation to army officers who include an unrepentantly fascist lieutenant as well as a captain who believes peace can be achieved without rancour or reparations. But then bloated, faceless, battered corpses arrive by river. Who are they? The women come en masse to claim them, and an edgy military fears it has new troubles on its hands.

Widows is not the unequivocal success *Death and the Maiden* was. Dorfman has not quite fulfilled his aim of wedding the realistic and mythic, the colloquial and the larger-than-life. In some of his characterisation he sacrifices finesse to simplicity. The narrator, a Dorfman surrogate who talks of his exile, his feelings of impotence and his need to bear witness, does not add enough to justify his intermittent, mooching presence. Moreover, Ian Brown's cast, their accents ranging from demotic Scots to genteel English, don't always achieve the right intensity.

But you cannot miss the generosity of Dorfman's attempts to reach into the mind of Sean Scanlan's flummoxed Captain, as he wars with his atrocity-weary sense of decency, or the power that sometimes emerges from the embattled women. There is a moment in the first half when they become a chorus, all wailing over the latest unidentified corpse: "It's mine, it's mine, please don't let it be mine." They half-want a man to bury decently and half-want to keep their fragile hopes alive. I imagine that's how many women in Chile and Argentina feel to this day.

The uniformly excellent Didier Henry (Oreste) and Diana Montague (Iphigénie) in WNO's *Iphigénie en Tauride*

Brilliant beyond belief

OPERA

Iphigénie en Tauride
Cardiff

There are evenings when lightning strikes an operatic performance, and one's sense of proportion falters. Welsh National Opera's revival of Gluck's *Iphigénie* was one such. In the aftermath of a simply shattering performance, one was left wondering whether any other composer has understood with such blinding clarity just what that exotic and irrational combination of words and notes called "opera" can yield, and indeed whether a greater opera has ever been written.

The Patrice Caurier and Moshe Leiser production, new five years ago but meticulously re-rehearsed in the aftermath of their *Carmen*, is severe almost to a fault: grey walls for a set, monochrome contemporary costumes with no differentiation between Greeks and Scythians. There is nothing to distract from the pitiless human drama, and with a cast as fine as that assembled at the New Theatre, it is pitiless indeed.

As before, Diana Montague is Iphigénie, and the only possible criticism is that her voice is almost too beautiful for a character in such pain. But her command of long, unbroken Gluckian line, her poise, her use of words, are impeccable, and her singing in the great second-act Lament held the audience breathless.

Peter Bronder returned as Pylade, and his delivery of *Unis de la plus tendre enfance*, that *Liebestod* for tenor, was the most expressive I have yet heard from this increasingly valuable artist.

There was one notable newcomer, the French baritone Didier Henry as Oreste. He is a superb, fearless actor. Before even opening his mouth he told you through body language alone of a man racked with guilt: add his warm, closely focused timbre and pungent declamation of the text, and you had an impersonation of almost unbearable intensity. Thus Oreste and Pylade arguing about which should die to save the other had the urgency of Alceste and Admète — oh pitiless Gluck — *at the gates of Hades*. Malcolm Donnelly, also new, made an ideally dotty (if less than ideally steady) Thoas.

The American conductor Steven Sloane combined due weight of sound with a sense of "period" derived from sparing string vibrato — the best of both worlds. He never pushed (the recitatives were wonderfully spacious), but let the drama unfold naturally in all its grandeur, encouraging his soloists to sing on a thread of tone in passages of intimate personal stress, allowing uncountable seconds of silence at moments where the drama is so white-hot that even notes and words seem inadequate. Here is a conductor who understands Gluck's genius.

This revival is now going on the road, with only five more performances. It must be seen.

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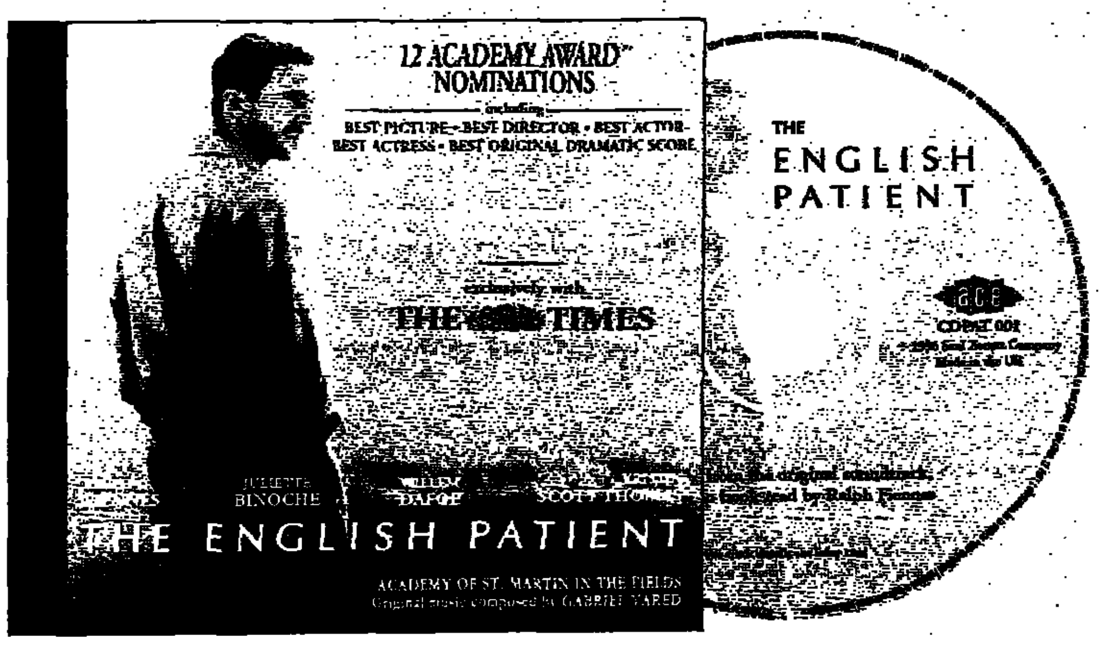

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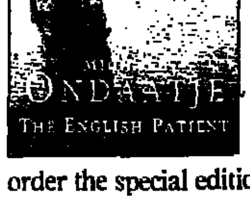

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CHANGING TIMES

I shan't vote for these philistines

Sir Peter Hall says neither of the major parties cares about the arts

"Why must democracy grow us these crops of political cowards?"

This is not a columnist writing about the antics of the Eurosceptics, but a line from Harley Granville Barker's *Waste*, a play written in 1926 and, to my mind, the wittiest and most candid exposure of politics since Shakespeare. It deals with a leader who aims to privatise the Church of England and use its revenues to build a great new system of national education. His efforts are frustrated by an avalanche of what we would now call "sleaze". He is involved with a married woman who dies undergoing an illegal abortion. In its day, the play was banned, probably more for its honesty about politicians than for its sexual awareness.

While I have been relishing the ironies of *Waste* in a rehearsal room, the tide of negative advertising has grown higher and higher on the billboards outside. The coming general election has been reduced to the level of playground abuse by all the silly slogans.

And the other day I realised that I wasn't going to vote: there was no point. Under our insane electoral rules, my vote wouldn't even count as a protest. My decision will bother nobody but me; but both parties are so craven when it comes to what I care about.

Our culture is my concern, and particularly the state of the arts. And this is not only because I earn my living making plays, operas and films. The English language is now our greatest export, and our prowess in the arts is still an international wonder (just) in a world increasingly uninterested in the talents of the British.

Sometimes I think we now have two Tory parties

But what about our politicians? The Tories have quietly decimated the arts over the past 18 years in the cause of free enterprise. There has been little consolation from Labour, whose tentative and muddled policy on the arts is a deep disappointment.

It is worth recalling the original idea of subsidy: to provide money so that admission prices could be kept low. Anyone who had a taste for the arts could therefore afford to enjoy them. But "get what the market can bear" was the Arts Council's edict under Thatcher. And the consequence is that you and I now pay high taxes to fund the Royal Opera House (which I don't begrudge) and are then asked to pay £150 a ticket, which I do.

In the 1980s the Tories launched their sponsorship schemes: the private sector was to contribute to the arts in order to encourage the development of new and exciting projects. It sounded plausible. We live in a mixed economy, so it seemed right that the arts, too, should have mixed funding. It was also stressed that sponsorship money would never affect central government funding.

The promise was, of course, broken. By always pitching grants below the level of inflation, the real subsidy was reduced year by year. By the 1990s, some theatres had as many people working on fundraising as were on the stage.

Labour sounded a little better during this time, although it is true that at the height of the old Greater London Council, there was distrust of "centres of excellence" such as the National Theatre, because they were deemed elitist. Money was to be given instead to community centres so that everyone could become artists together. But generally speaking, Labour's heart seemed in the right place.

Meanwhile the great erosion of the arts, the giveaway of our broadcasting system and the decline in our educational standards continued. The arts in particular have been deliberately discredited during the past ten years by a carefully selected vocabulary used by Tory politicians. Artists who turned to the Arts Council for support were told they had a welfare state mentality; if they protested, they were called "whingers". And the acting profession could always be declared brain-dead by branding them "luvvies".

Then came a new instrument of destruction: the National Lottery. Once again, we were told that it would never affect central subsidy. Although initially it was used only for developing or refurbishing buildings, the lottery is taking a more and more central position. I believe that if the Tories are re-elected, it will be used to stop subsidy altogether. Then (because of the genuine social need) we could well be told that lottery money must be used for good works such as new hospitals instead. So the bonus could be short-lived.

Meanwhile, Tony Blair has at last pronounced on the future of the arts. He was high on their commercial value ("the creative economy"), full of promise for some post-millennium future (funded by the lottery, of course) but very low indeed on any recognition of the crisis we are in today. There is not a regional orchestra without financial troubles, nor a regional theatre that has not had to cut back its productions, reduce its actors and, consequently, reduce its audiences. The regional theatre is dying fast, and this will soon have an effect on our great central theatre institutions and ultimately on the standard of our broadcasting. Above all, we have neglected the young who are tomorrow's audiences.

Seat prices must come down: subsidy must be used again to ensure accessibility. And young people who have talent must again be properly supported by government grants through music college and drama school. Tony Blair mentioned none of this. Instead we were asked to look forward to rebuilding the decimated arts some time in the new century through the agency of a new body called Nesta, which is not a bedtime drink but the National Endowment for Science, Humanities and the Arts. Once again it is funded by the lottery. So there is jam tomorrow but no need of jam today.

Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, derided this pale Labour policy as a "luvvies' charter", demonstrating the complete contempt that the Conservative Party has for the acting profession. I sometimes think we now have two Tory parties, one moving to the right and one maintaining its position in the centre, desperately seeking election. But neither cares about the state of our culture. And they allow us to be just as indifferent about other great issues such as the funding of parties by sectional interests, our absurd electoral system, or Europe. Our national complacency is kept secure.

I live in Chelsea, as safe a seat as the Tories can muster. Our candidate is Alan Clark, so if I am feeling in an anarchic mood, he presents an amusing temptation. But I cannot vote for him. I have only voted Tory once when, in 1979, it seemed vital to curb the power of the unions. Thatcher achieved this on a minority vote and I was glad. But I never bargained for the rest of her revolution, which celebrated greed and encouraged our society to become more brutal. So I shall pass, regretfully.

Lord Nolan urges young people not to prefer public protest to democratic participation

Are we a nation of political cynics?

I learnt two lessons from the setting up of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. The first was the importance of a free press, with investigative skills and resources in bringing to light matters of public concern which would otherwise remain hidden. The second was the power of the media to influence the conduct of government and of political life. There is much talk of accountability, but it sometimes overlooks the most obvious example — the availability of almost everyone in public life, from the Prime Minister downwards, to answer questions from journalists or broadcasters at almost any hour of day or night.

I am a wholehearted supporter of a free and, where necessary, investigative press. In all the countries I know, a free press goes with an independent judiciary — in which I have a vested interest but which I believe to be equally important. But there is a price to be paid.

One part of that price, excessive cynicism about public life, is reflected in the picture of suspicion and distrust of politicians and journalists which opinion polls reveal. It was also reflected in the correspondence which we received from people in all walks of life. When we asked newspaper editors whether they shared the public's distrust of politicians, they assured us that they did not. They said that our politicians were, on the whole, honest and hard-working. How then did the public get this false impression of politicians, unless through the newspapers? The editors said that newspapers were not to blame. The politicians brought it on themselves. There is clearly some truth in this. Politicians, particularly when a general election is in sight, are apt to accuse each other of dishonesty, and the public may be forgiven for thinking that the politicians ought to know.

When falling into superficial criticism on the basis of newspaper reports, I remind myself of the danger of armchair cynicism. It is all too easy to blame others — politicians are dishonest, judges are too soft on crime, or the local council is corrupt. If you feel yourself inclined to adopt opinions like that, I urge you not to sit back but to do something about it. This is a free country, but we only deserve our freedom if we make proper use of it. If you think that politicians are dishonest, and possibly corrupt, go and talk to your MP or your local councillor. If you think that the judges are too soft on criminals, spend a day in the nearest Crown Court. Only then will you have something on which to form your own judgment. And if you still think something is wrong, do something about it. Get involved. Use your democratic rights, especially free speech.

We have a general election coming. Yet some people seem weary of the campaign before it has started. There has been concern about the low opinion young people in particular seem to have of politicians and the political process. I have been struck by the need to have campaigns to get young people to vote, both here and in the United States. Have we really reached the stage where the right to vote, so hard-won by earlier generations, has now to be sold like a patent medicine show?

We therefore need to beware of cynicism. Young people are not cynical in any general sense of the word. In particular, they are not cynical about aims and ideals. But they may be cynical, like some of their elders, about politicians and political processes. I think here about the recent roads protests. Some protesters were quoted as rubbishing the right to vote and urging the power of direct action.

They are utterly wrong to disparage the ballot box. There is a place for public protest in a democracy. But you cannot reach a sensible view about competing priorities by focusing your action on one issue and leaving all the others aside. The function of democracy is to enable civilised debate about difficult issues that cannot be reduced to simple good versus bad. Promoting direct action above democratic participation is tantamount to contempt for your fellow citizens.

But voting is just the beginning. I urge you to go beyond this and get involved in politics, meeting and questioning people in public life, either for a party or an issue. The British disease is an unthinking cynicism about politics. The cure is not easeful sloth, and certainly not cynicism: it is participation. Governments have a great capacity to do good, and just as great a capacity to do harm. The only way to be sure that they do the right thing is to keep an eye on them, to challenge them, to hold them to account and, above all, to take part in them.

Public life in this country, in politics or in the media, is as attractive as ever for those who want to change the world. It is not for those who want to get rich quick. Public life is for the brave, for the tough and for those who want power, not just for its own sake but also for unselfish reasons. There are plenty of people like that in this country. After two and a half years of inspecting sleaze, I remain a democrat and an optimist.

This is an edited extract from a speech given this week to St John's College Political Society, Portsmouth.

Rural ride among the ruins

Where Cobbett saw pleasant pastures, today we see an industrial countryside, prey to polluting profiteers

Simon Jenkins

When William Cobbett crested the last of the Surrey hills on his approach to London, he saw before him a pestilential boil. Behind him lay a country of honest Englishmen, a land of yeomen who held fast to the old ways, to free enterprise and sound money. Ahead lay "a great wen . . . a monster called the metropolis of empire". Over the Thames basin rose a stench of decrepitude. The restless city seethed with politics, monopolists, lobbyists, immorality and paper money.

Today the author of *Rural Rides* might feel a reverse sensation. The great wen is now a city set in stone. It evolves, but roughly to plan. London is broadly the same physical entity it was at the war's end, and will be inherited as such by future generations. Its land use is conserved under tight laws and the property market flourishes within their constraints.

Look out on the modern countryside and Cobbett would cry with anguish. He would see an anarchy of greed and politics. He would rage at the yeomen of England drenching their fields in chemicals, tearing out their hedges, polluting their streams and throwing up silos, bungalows and wind farms with no care for anything but cash. Terrified politicians bicker and shower farmers with money. When they poison the nation's food by their malpractices, they are not punished but compensated with paper money from the pockets of taxpayers.

How Cobbett would have railed. Yet even today he would have found few supporters. Criticising countrymen is still politically incorrect. You may insult the city (or business or journalism) and pass muster, but you may not insult that most delicate sensibility, farming. The BBC dare not pension off *The Archers*, begun as a plug for agriculture after the war. British culture was to have no finer community of souls than Ambridge. Like doctors and policemen, the farmer was awarded that professional gong, a warm-hearted serial on the Beeb.

The game is surely up. After 14 years of explaining to farmers how to poach subsidy from the taxpayer, the story editor of *The Archers*, Graham Harvey, has turned gamekeeper. The business has stuck in his throat. In *The Killing of the Countryside*, published by Cape this week, he concludes that almost all farming has become a mega-industry polluting out of control. Its raw material is 80 per cent of the landscape, which it is ruining. Nor is the ruination anything to do with market economics. The destruction is at the behest of government policy and with taxpayers' money, some £10 billion a year.

Harvey's book is a modern *Grapes of Wrath*. He is enraged at ministers who subsidise industrial farming because big farmers are the best lobbyists (including 32 MPs). He is appalled that taxpayers must support methods that strip land of wildlife, erode topsoil and pollute rivers. When a salmonella, BSE or *E. coli* scandal brings the juggernaut to a halt, he sees a Treasury rushing forward with cash to get it moving again. "We have abandoned our countryside to the grubbers and sprayers, the exploiters and the profiteers," he writes. "We have allowed them to assault our landscapes, wage war on our wildlife and abuse our farm livestock. Now finally they have corrupted the purity of our food."

I have read such diatribes before, from Marion Shoard, Oliver Rackham and numerous critics of Brussels farm policies. I have seldom read a more meticulous or devastating case for the prosecution. (Nor have I read a rejoinder that is other than self-serving.) Harvey lists the payments that made last year the most lucrative for agriculture in recent history, as prices and subsidies soared upwards in happy tandem. Farmers derided tourists and ramblers as "vandals", yet they demanded that those same visitors pay them £3.2 billion in BSE compensation. The "anti-vandals" ripped out 11,000 miles of hedge last year alone, sprayed more tons of nitrate into the soil and denuded the nation of skylarks, nightingales, corn buntings and lapwings. If a motorway builder threatens a natterjack toad, thousands rise up in protest. But not if a farmer threatens one. Harvey reckons that the past 50 years have seen some 90 per cent of the countryside turned over to monoculture, stripped of hundreds of species of flora and fauna.

While Harvey's attachment to rural values and organic production can be cloying, his argument is robust. He has no truck with National Farmers' Union blackmail — "maintain subsidies or we shall behave 'even worse'" — nor with taxpayers giving farmers money to be rural conservationists. He bids them live or die as do other mortals, in a regulated marketplace. There is no reason to continue a subsidy regime meant for war. Britain, indeed all Europe, can feed itself on a quarter of its present farmed land. Paying anyone merely to exist is poor economics. Paying 12 farmers more than £1 million each for unwanted food, as happened last year, is indefensible.

Harvey has two crystal-clear prescriptions: stop subsidies altogether, and impose on farming planning control without compensation, as exists in towns. Land prices would fall. Some marginal land would go out of production and revert to woodland and common, but new entrepreneurs ready to exploit the new market could afford to buy land. If intensive farmers "behaved worse" to sustain yield, they should be stopped, as urban property developers are stopped. The bureaucracy that goes into paying subsidies should go into conserving a landscape that 80 per cent of non-farmers want to protect — and for which they have already paid through the nose. This is not to penalise farmers, just to treat them like everybody else.

Planning does not impoverish. As Harvey and Shoard have pointed out, the richest parts of cities are nowadays those most carefully regulated. The Duke of Westminster cannot demolish his properties in Belgravia as he could his properties in Cheshire. That does not make Belgravia less lucrative. All land in a democracy is "planned", since it is in limited supply. The challenge of planning is to make the free market work with, rather than against, the grain of public opinion. The core principle is that of regulation without crippling compensation. This principle has applied to manufacturing industry since the 19th century and to urban land development since the 1930s. It should now apply to the countryside. Paying farmers not to farm is obscene.

Harvey's prescription is no leap in the dark. In 1984 the New Zealand Cabinet (true Thatcherites, as opposed to Britain's half-hearted ones) decided to end farm subsidies — and did. Land prices and food prices fell, as did public expenditure. The result, says Harvey, "is that the price of land in New Zealand now reflects the market value of its output, not the capitalised value of public support". Agriculture did not end.

The countryside is cited as the chief reason why visitors come to Britain. Among Britons it came third, after "freedom" and the National Health Service in a MORI poll on what people think is good about Britain. I am a city-dweller who loves the countryside simply as a pleasure to behold. I admire those few farmers who care about its diversity and beauty, and who seem always to be fighting a subsidy regime intent on making them ruin it. A regulated free market could not make it worse.

Every government coming to power promises to "end the lunacies of the common agricultural policy" — as now is Labour. It then piles lunacy on lunacy. These promises are empty. Each attempt to reform the CAP increases its cost. European farm policy is like the medieval Calais wool staple, a producer monopoly in restraint of trade. Its essence is to resist its own reform.

Harvey's grim message is that *this policy is not just expensive*. It is polluting Britain's environment while undermining the quality of life and the purity of food. If so, there has been no more grotesque abuse of public administration in modern times.

Cobbett wrote that "from a very early age, I imbibed the opinion that it was every man's duty to do all that lay in his power to leave his country as good as he found it". Today the old growler would survey the landscape, turn in his saddle and spit.

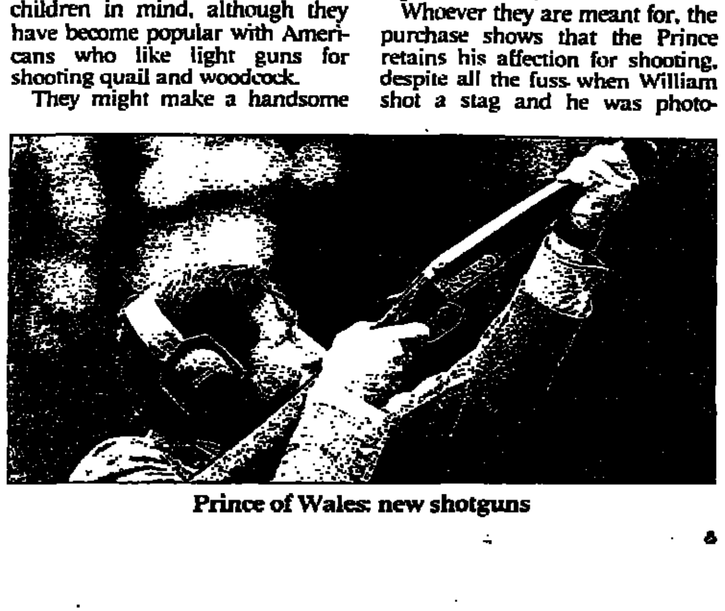
THE TIMES DIARY

Big shot

THE PRINCE OF WALES has spent £65,000 on a pair of handmade 28-bore shotguns from Asprey's in Bond Street, according to Edward Asprey, in Melbourne for the Grand Prix. The 28-bores are designed with women and children in mind, although they have become popular with Americans who like light guns for shooting quail and woodcock.

They might make a handsome confirmation present for Prince William, although giving one each to William and Harry might make for a happier Easter holidays. It can be safely assumed that Camilla Parker Bowles wouldn't mind having the shooters, either.

Whoever they are meant for, the purchase shows that the Prince retains his affection for shooting, despite all the fuss when William shot a stag and he was photographed fooling around with his sons and their guns over Christmas.



Prince of Wales: new shotguns

The standard 28-bore goes for £27,500, but the Prince has gone for additional scrolled engraving jolts, the gun equivalent of go-faster stripes on a car, bumping the guns up to £32,500 each.

At least the money will be going to a fellow royal. Asprey's is now owned by Prince Jeffrey of Brunei, the brother of the Sultan, who reputedly spent so much on knick-knacks in the shop that he thought he might as well buy it.

● *Less important matters were put aside at Thursday morning's Cabinet meeting as the Prime Minister began by offering collective Cabinet congratulations to William Hague on his engagement. As the Cabinet Secretary duly transcribed the good wishes into the minutes, Hague beamed and his cranium glowed a sugary pink.*

Budged out

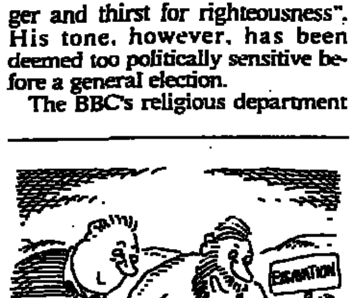
ONCE whipless, now just disgruntled, Nicholas Budgen, Tory MP for Wolverhampton South West, has complained to the Chief Whip about the Prime Minister. In the Commons on Tuesday, Budgen rose to ask the PM about immigration control. The Labour benches shouted him down, calling him "a disgrace" and worse.

The PM gave a terse reply, which to the casual observer looked like a slapdown. Horrifyingly, even Tony Blair rose to congratulate the PM on his answer. "I would like immigration made an election issue, and an apology," Budgen growls. No 10 is unlikely to give one.

Bias cut

COMPLAINTS from the political parties about bias on the BBC seem to have had their effect. BBC Radio 2 has dropped an interview with Tony Benn due to air on Wednesday from a series called *Salt of the Earth*, in which well-known figures discuss their interpretation of the Beatitudes. Benn had chosen to talk about "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness". His tone, however, has been deemed too politically sensitive before a general election.

The BBC's religious department said: "In order to avoid what could be perceived as political imbalance, the BBC took the view that this series should be amended." Benn has been replaced by Myra Hindley's former solicitor, Andrew McCooey.



"I think we've stumbled across Wensleydale Man"

● *Harry, an American Harris hawk, has been employed by the Rugby Football Union to rid Twickenham of pigeons. Once a week, Harry swoops around the stadium scaring the other birds who roost and unburden themselves in the stands. A wily spokesman at the RFU says: "He comes on a different day each week, to keep the pigeons on their toes."*

Stock trade

HAROLD Macmillan's granddaughter has taken to modelling. Rebecca Macmillan, 17, the daughter of the present Earl of Stockton, is currently in her last year at Marlborough. On Thursday evening, however, she turned out for a fashion show in Belgrave Square organised by the frock dealer Fiona Aitken, former girlfriend of Sir Benjamin Slade, the money behind John Redwood's leadership campaign. Slade, incidentally, is building a £50,000, two-tiered kennel for his dogs in Somerset.

Macmillan: walking tall

Miss Macmillan's brother, Dan, 21, joined a modelling agency after leaving Eton. His sister, however, will have to overcome her shyness if she is to show a split pelmet skirt off to its best advantage. "It was quite fun," she says, "but rather humiliating as well."

P·H·S

هكذا من الاصل

هكذا من الاعلام

PAY AS YOU ERR

The pension industry must give back as quickly as it took

Daylight robbery, literally, has been the fate of at least 600,000 people in the past ten years or so. Yet what they suffered will never be recorded in the crime statistics. Had the actions of large parts of the private pension industry in Britain during the past decade been openly unlawful there would have been a national outcry. As it is, the theoretically legal and technical nature of their plight has largely hidden the story from public view.

It is difficult to understate the scale of the pension scandal of the 1980s. For good reasons a degree of deregulation was introduced into what had previously been a distinctly uncompetitive area. The management of some of Britain's best-known and most important financial institutions responded by unleashing an army of salesmen onto the public. These task forces, whose salaries were largely dependent on commissions, persuaded hundreds of thousands of people to abandon very sound company pension schemes or the Serps system — both of which had a guaranteed benefit package — in favour of personal pension schemes of dubious relative value.

That the plans being sold were unattractive is not a matter of conflicting opinion, alternative interpretation, or even of variable economic assumptions. To those who understood the detail they were self-evidently of inferior value. The sole purpose both of the snake-oil salesmen and the senior executives who employed them was to maximise their own financial standing at considerable cost to their "clients". Their victims were all too frequently the poorly paid and financially innocent who believed, and were entitled to believe, on the basis of what they were told, that their contributions would provide a substantial sum in future years. In practice, exorbitant fees and charges swallowed a huge proportion of their investment.

When the full scale of this outrage became evident, the predictable happened. Large numbers of salesmen were dismissed but the overwhelming majority of the management who had inspired, hired, and ultimately fired them, kept their own posts and company pension plans. Almost seven years ago, when the affair was exposed, promises were made by those responsible that the whole matter would be investigated and those who suffered compensated. Those pledges have proved about as reliable as the original policies.

For all the huffing and puffing from the Securities and Investments Board only a few of those affected have either been placed back into the orginal programmes from which they were duped or been awarded a reciprocal cash settlement. The trade lobby insists that it would like to move faster but that these matters are extremely complicated. The same firms were able to move quickly enough when they saw the opportunity to remove cash from these customers. The regulator should demand a similar level of speed when it comes to restoring it. Sir Andrew Large has been given three weeks by Angela Knight, junior Treasury Minister, to effect this. He should regard it as a matter of personal honour that he does so.

This week one of the most imaginative ideas for pension provision in a century has been placed by Peter Lilley before the British public. It is painful to admit that the best objection to it is not the motives of the politicians concerned, nor the small print beneath the superstructure, but whether the private pension industry is worthy of the trust implicit. That should be a matter of deeper shame for the companies concerned. Until the ill deeds of the past decade are properly dealt with, little faith can be placed in either industry or regulator by the pensioners of the future.

COUNTRY CONSENSUS

Campaigners seek to hunt, shoot and stand together

The hunting horn is giving forth an uncertain sound. The proposed merger of the Countryside Movement, the Countryside Business Group and the British Field Sports Society (BFSS) is intended to give supporters of traditional country pursuits a more coherent campaigning voice. With Labour committed to ending hunting on government land, and likely to give the Commons the opportunity to ban the sport outright, defenders of rural tradition will need to show solidarity. Unfortunately, the brief history of the Countryside Movement, and the worries around its proposed merger, suggest that lessons still need to be learnt by those who speak for rural Britain.

The last merger which involved the Countryside Movement's chairman, Sir David Steel, involved a traditional outfit, his Liberal Party, swallow an upstart rival, the SDP. This time the dynamic is the same, but the roles are reversed. The Countryside Movement was launched to break the mould of rural politics by uniting defenders of the natural environment and social ecology. It sought, wisely, to connect the fortunes and interests of rural workers, traditional tradespeople, sportsmen, residents and sensitive environmentalists. Sadly, as Sir David concedes, his Movement did not attract the funds or momentum it hoped for and now it is to join forces with the, much older, BFSS.

As with the merger of Liberals and SDP, the fusion has also created splits. The BFSS's main energies have been devoted to defending hunting and there are tensions between horse and hound on one side, and rod and gun on the other. The National Federation of Anglers' president, who sits on the board of the Countryside Movement, will not join the merged body and neither will the British Association for Shooting and Conservation. Both fear that they will be tarnished by too close a link with the hunting lobby. They believe that Labour has hunters in its sights and do not want to suffer collateral damage.

Their concerns are understandable, if narrow. Given the popularity of fishing it seems unlikely that Labour would move against the sport. Shooting is a slightly different matter. Although it does not attract the visceral opposition of animal rights activists in the same way as hunting, the zeal with which Labour has argued for a total ban on handguns suggests a future atrocity committed with a shotgun or rifle could bring even tighter restrictions on gun use.

It is not, however, on a fine calculation of lobbying advantage that the future health of rural traditions will depend. All those who know and enjoy the real countryside, whether in pink, tweed, denim or waders, should seek to ensure they work together; their sympathies are stronger than their differences. With politics increasingly dominated by urban professionals and Labour still overwhelmingly the party of cities and suburbs, the concerns of rural Britain need to be articulated effectively. Hunters, fishers and shooters as well as saddlers, grooms and others coexist in a delicate social ecology. It is in no conservationist's interest to see it so rudely upset.

A ban on hunting would adversely affect the quality of country life for most rural residents. It would deprive many of employment as well as enjoyment and rob communities of a widely-appreciated and unsnobbish social focus. Of course, some hunt supporters are guilty of an almost feral attachment to the chase; but a genuinely liberal temperament should tolerate the settled habits of a significant minority. Hunting may need reform, but it also needs friends if the familiar contours of the countryside are not to disappear.

SHINING EXAMPLE

A grateful, graceful pianist — unless you are a US critic

The Australian film *Shine* has captivated audiences around the world because of its inspirational message. The triumph of the spirit over mental breakdown, the redeeming power of love and the exhilaration of music reverberate in all discussion afterwards. Little wonder that public curiosity about David Helfgott, the pianist whose story is told in the film, is insatiable or that audiences are flocking to hear the playing of a man whose early promise was so blighted.

Responding to this crescendo of interest, Mr Helfgott has now begun a concert tour of the US to rapturous acclaim by the public. But the critics have been vituperative. In savage reviews that smack of spite, they have attacked his performance as shapeless and incoherent, described his first concert as a painful and disturbing experience and accused him of playing without phrasing, form, accuracy or emotional content.

Their wounding remarks have been prompted, many believe, by pique that the public's reaction has been dictated not by the mirthless critics' Olympian verdicts but by the populist influence of film — and a non-American one at that. These sour tantrums have, in turn, infuriated American audiences whose standing ovations were a tribute as much to Mr Helfgott's return from the brink of madness as to his music.

Has American criticism become so devoid of human warmth, so isolated in its purist aesthetic that it is blind to the strivings and achievements that inspire people? Such questions are often put to critics — not least by performers, artists and writers. They reply that their job is not to offer subjective judgments on personality or be swayed by an artist's popularity but to evaluate the worth of the oeuvre put before the public. They would deny the accusation that they are particularly harsh on those whose acclaim is immediate. But some critics, having seen dozens of promising performers whose potential is ignored, can be embittered that others, often less talented, become stars thanks to publicity or money.

With Mr Helfgott, they miss the point. Mental breakdown was not a publicity stunt; nor was his return to the concert hall a claim to be a great performer. He is a man who has not fully escaped the terrors of mental instability but who can keep the demons at bay through music. The link between the two is, sadly, common: John Ogdon was engaged in a lifelong struggle against mental imbalance; Van Cliburn, a child prodigy, became a recluse at the height of his fame; and Horowitz, in his long career, was as racked in his mind as he was gifted in his fingers. Mr Helfgott, with the loving support of his wife and friends, has achieved a balance that is an inspiration in life, as in the film, to others less gifted but equally afflicted. His reply to the critics is as devastating as it is serene: "Mustn't be so *serioso*. It's all a game. Must be grateful."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

High indignation on Hogg tidings

From Dr R. J. Lamden

Sir, Messrs Hogg, Soames and the Earl Howe might do well to bear in mind the behaviour of Sir Thomas Dugdale, at one time Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

His was not a matter involving either the health of the general population or of the Armed Forces. Rather it concerned Crichel Down, a piece of farmland which had been compulsorily purchased by his ministry, and which had not been returned to its former owner when the ministry had finished with it.

A minor matter one might suppose, which had been badly mishandled by the Civil Service, and of which Sir Thomas had no knowledge. Nonetheless on July 19, 1954 (report, July 21, 1954), he wrote to his Prime Minister:

> In view of the criticisms which have been levelled at the handling of the Crichel Down case, for which as Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries I accept responsibility, I have come to the conclusion that I must ask you to submit my resignation to the Queen.

Have the greatly inflated salaries now paid to ministers led to the abolition of the concept of ministerial responsibility?

Yours etc,
R. J. LAMDEN,
7 Weald Rise,
Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire.
March 7.

From Lieutenant-Colonel T. Rigby, Royal Signals (retd)

Sir, Is it not surprising that the conclusions of a report, rather than plain commonsense, are needed to convince those responsible for standards of animals entering abattoirs that the animals should be clean?

Yours faithfully,
T. RIGBY,
Fairfield House, Millbrook Way,
Orleton, Ludlow, Shropshire.
March 7.

From Dr Hugh Saxton

Sir, Is it not now clear that there is an urgent need for a Freedom of Information Act so that ministers can have access to information otherwise known only to their civil servants?

Yours faithfully,
H. M. SAXTON,
Ash House, Houghton Road,
Stockbridge, Hampshire.
March 7.

Test ban treaty

From the Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Sir, On Monday the Government admitted in a written answer that the legislation promised in the Queen's Speech to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (report, October 24, 1996) will not now be introduced in this parliamentary session.

There was no explanation and no apology. A ratification Bill would be unopposed and take up the minimum of parliamentary time. Ratification is not an unknown process. Nor was the need for such a Bill unexpected.

It is important that Britain, as a nuclear weapons state, is seen to act with some sense of urgency. This country's record on nuclear disarmament issues continues to be one of grudging obstruction. What has caused this latest delay?

Yours faithfully,
DAVE KNIGHT,
Chair, CND,
162 Holloway Road, N7.
March 6.

Bank and Parliament

From Viscount Exmouth

Sir, Mr Leolin Price's articulate assessment of the role of an independent Bank of England or UK central bank (letter March 3) fails to observe that such a body would, under the terms of the Maastricht treaty, be answerable to the European central bank in Frankfurt, and likewise our Parliament would be answerable to the European Parliament, thereby losing all contact with their electors.

Surely Mr Price must have identified numerous directives emanating from Brussels which are "not compatible with our constitutional arrangements"?

Yours faithfully,
PAUL EXMOUTH,
House of Lords.

Export earnings

From Mr Bill Kearns

Sir, There is always a danger that a quoted statistic becomes an accepted fact. Before this happens can we have some evidence for the National Audit Office's suggestion (report, March 4) that every pound spent on trade promotion in the Far East last year earned £78 in exports. I spent more than 20 years in the Diplomatic Service, most of the time doing commercial work, and I do not believe the statistic.

There is a worthwhile role for diplomats to provide assistance to exporters but the case for commercial diplomacy being adequately funded is not enhanced by the use of such silly statistics.

Yours etc,
BILL KEARNS,
11 Court Royal Mews,
Northlands Road, Southampton.
March 4

Albania's needs in present crisis

From Miss Primrose Peacock

Sir, Whilst agreeing wholeheartedly with your leader today, "Albania aflame", it is worth pointing out that Albania has had numerous non-governmental friends during the past six years.

Currently over 90 British charities, including some household names, are running Albanian projects in addition to those organised by academic institutions, cultural and religious bodies, etc. A few businesses have made valiant efforts to establish an Albanian base.

However, a major stumbling block has been official British indifference, bureaucratic delay and the wastage of scarce resources on window dressing. A sharp contrast to the 1930s when Britain played a leading role in assisting Albania, and even trained the gendarmerie.

If only a small fraction of the funding and expertise that has been poured into former Yugoslavia since 1991 had been made available to the Albanians, who are generally pro-British, we might not now be seeing the current tragedy.

Yours sincerely,
PRIMROSE PEACOCK
(Editor, *Besa*, for friends of Albania),
PO Box 155, Taunton TA2 8YW.
March 3.

From Mr Johnathan Sunley

Sir, I cannot agree with the picture you paint of Albanian President Sali Berisha cracking down in neo-Stalinist fashion on his country's news media (leading article, "Albania's Press", March 5).

Since the declaration of a state of emergency at the weekend, it is true that the only newspaper to have appeared daily is the one closest to the ruling Democratic Party. Still, other papers which might be less friendly towards the Government but which are prepared nonetheless to carry official statements are not prevented from being published. This is attested by the regular appearance of the English-language *Albanian Daily News*, the predominantly pro-rebel articles of which are eagerly awaited by the international correspondents present in Tirana, whose own newspapers continue to arrive in the country's capital each day.

As for interruptions to the broadcasting of electronic media, it is again true that both Euronews and the BBC Albanian Service were briefly taken off the air before being restored. The majority of Albanians we have talked to, however, have expressed bewilderment at the tendentious reporting of these two organisations. Euronews, for example, recently claimed that Albanians had been reduced to selling blood to make up for their pyramid scheme losses.

There is no comparison between the measures being taken by today's armed forces or secret police with those of their communist-era counterparts. Albania's then dictator, Enver Hoxha, was unable to tolerate private cars or even shoulder-length hair — let alone alternative political parties and an elected parliament.

Sincerely,
JOHNATHAN SUNLEY,
British Helsinki Human Rights Group,
c/o Hotel Miniri, Tirana.
March 6.

From the Executive Director of Children's Aid Direct

Sir, The collapse of civil order in the south of Albania has much deeper causes than the pyramid scandals which have acted as the trigger. The democratic system, elections, banking and indeed leadership are in a fledgeling state. The economy is artificial and both the Government and people are challenged with tasks well beyond their resources and experience. What Albania needs is investment in know-how, education and social welfare, and only we can offer this.

Ironically we are even now staring at an opportunity rather than a threat, but one that calls for a direct response in investment, aid, skills and expertise.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID H. W. GRUBB,
Executive Director,
Children's Aid Direct,
82 Caversham Road,
Reading, Berkshire.

Real scale of child prostitution

From Mr Barry Sheerman, MP for Huddersfield (Labour)

Sir, I was surprised to read in your report of March 3, the view of a former president of the Association of Directors of Social Services that charities were exaggerating the incidence of child prostitution in this country.

As a parliamentarian who has been attempting for some time to draw attention to what appears to be a serious problem involving the manipulation, control and abuse of children, I find Mr SeQueiras's views very much at odds with information I have gathered from the police, university researchers and grassroots social workers.

I have no doubt that there is a serious matter for concern here, which affects, at the very least, most of our large cities. Surely what is now needed is a proper evaluation, to be carried out by the police, social services and the voluntary sector, as to the precise extent of the problem, speedily followed by appropriate steps to protect children from this particularly unpleasant form of child sexual abuse.

Some directors of social work may protest, but there is not a little evidence to suggest that too few of them have either recognised the problem or organised their service to do something constructive about it.

It is my belief that there is a very significant number of children being exploited and abused in this way by unscrupulous individuals and that the voluntary sector should be congratulated on conducting serious work in this area.

Yours faithfully,
BARRY SHEERMAN,
House of Commons.
March 3.

Vandals at work

From the Rector of St Peter's, Walworth

Sir, The desecration of the tomb of Sir John Soane (report and photograph, March 5) should cause little surprise. As rector of one of his two church buildings which remain in use as parish churches (the other being St John's, Bethnal Green), we are fighting a losing battle against vandals.

In the last year we have been forced to close the outer doors of our building, which have formerly been open to allow people to view the inside of the church through the glass interior doors. Casual break-ins produced little theft but much damage. Closing the doors has stopped entry, but now they, whoever they are, have started on the exterior. Extensive graffiti have appeared on the stonework of the north side.

In the case of the tomb the cause of the desecration was theft; here in Walworth, it appears simply to be destruction or despoliation of a building clearly held of little account by the vandals concerned.

On your front page today (later editions) the headline "Tory MP savages friend and foe" illustrates the casual verbal damage which seems acceptable when we disagree with something, or hold it in low esteem. I wonder if there is a link between the two?

Yours faithfully,
GORDON MURRAY,
The Rectory,
Liverpool Grove, SE17.
March 5.

Surname usage

From Sir Anthony Kershaw

Sir, In the matter of how one should address other British men (letters, February 8, 18, 20, 22, 25, March 3) the old practice was clear.

One's social equals, and fellow members of a closed society such as the Bar, House of Commons, gentlemen's clubs, etc, one addressed by surname, and one did not shake hands. Members of the working class, eg, gardeners, butlers, porters, etc — also by surname.

Others were "Mr" in speech, "Esq" in writing, and one always shook hands.

All that is stuff and nonsense today. Everyone is "Esq". Esquire used to be a rank; only those whose father held the rank of Major or equivalent were entitled to use it. But woe betide the MP who uses plain "Mr" when writing to constituents.

Nowadays the computer has reduced the whole thing to total chaos anyway.

I beg to remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ANTHONY KERSHAW
(Conservative MP for Stroud, 1955-87),
West Barn, Didmarton,
Badminton, Gloucestershire.
March 4.

From Mr T. F. Nolf

Sir, I am indebted to Mr Basil Greenhill for pointing out (letter, March 3) that, in his book, the explorer Frederik Hjalmar Johansen makes special mention of his companion Fridtjof Nansen's proposal, made after they had spent over nine months on the Arctic ice in what can only be described as very close company, that they should perhaps relax formalities and begin to say "thou" instead of "you".

Mr Greenhill helpfully supplied the date — December 31, 1895 — and this made it easy to check what Nansen himself made of it. I am disappointed to have to report that in his own book, *Farthest North* (George Newnes, 1898), Dr Nansen does not mention the occasion; he continues to refer to his companion as "Johansen" right up to the end of the voyage. Quite amazing, seeing that they shared a double sleeping bag.

Yours faithfully,
T. NOLF,
6d Dunbar Street, Old Aberdeen.
March 3.

Weekend Money letters, page 38

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Bishop's decision to marry divorcée

From the Reverend J. C. Brooks

Sir, In your report (March 4) of the Bishop of Birmingham's controversial intention to marry a divorcée, the lady's first husband is referred to as a "retired GP". Retired or not from medicine, he is also an Anglican priest, living in the Diocese of Birmingham, who has not remarried.

Quite apart from the desirability, or otherwise, of the Bishop's action from the point of view of ecclesiastical discipline (the Reverend de Berry's letter, March 5), a further question should perhaps be considered — how does this action affect the relationship of the Bishop with one of his priests who is the first husband of his intended wife?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BROOKS,
Milbanke,
3 Mill Road, Deal, Kent.
March 5.

From the Vicar of Houghton Regis

Sir, Mr Steve Jenkins, apparently a spokesman "for the Church of England" (report, March 4), tells us that there is nothing in canon law to prevent the proposed remarriage between the Lord Bishop of Birmingham and a lady whose first marriage has had its legal form dissolved at civil law but whose husband is still living.

But that is to read canon law as though it were like secular coercive regulation.

The point is surely that the Lord Bishop, at his consecration, declared that he would "strive to fashion his own life and that of his household according to the way of Christ". The Church of England still accepts the Western Catholic understanding that the marriage bond can be dissolved only upon death of one of the parties (not when people claim that the marriage has "died") and this is reflected in her canon law.

To sidestep canon law by "marrying" in a register office is not quite what the flock would hope for from one of Christ's undershepherds, but increasingly in these troublous days, precisely what we come to expect.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN REDVERS HARRIS,
The Vicarage,
Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire.
March 4.

Mops ahoy

From Professor Alec Eden

Sir, It was with considerable interest that I read of the six Scottish cleaning ladies who went to sea with the destroyer *HMS Newcastle* "to carry out general duties in the galley and dining hall" (report, March 5).

When I served in 1952 as an Ordinary Seaman in the last *HMS Newcastle*, a City-class cruiser in the Korean War, we did not have cleaning ladies. Neither did we have a dining hall. We ate, slept, relaxed and did almost everything else in the same somewhat confined space.

It was called — not inappropriately — the mess deck.

Yours faithfully,
ALEC EDEN,
The Thatched House,
20 Mead Road, Torquay, Devon.
March 5.

High table

From Mr Allen Scott

Sir, Philip Howard's "Word-watching" (March 4) gives the definition of Fu-Fu as "a kind of dough made out of plantains". My understanding was that Fu-Fu was made from flour derived from corn or cassava, or more commonly from boiled and pounded yam, and was normally the partner of soups or stews.

As long-time "Coasters", resident in Nigeria, we served it with groundnut stew and tested the quality of the Fu-Fu by tossing a small sample in the air to the ceiling.

If it stuck to the ceiling it passed the test and was fit to eat.

Yours faithfully,
ALLEN SCOTT,
Christmas Pie House,
Green Lane East, Christmas Pie,
Nr Guildford, Surrey.
March 4.

All over the place

From Mr Harry Ganz

Sir, I must congratulate the Post Office on its most recent attempts to make a delivery. Last October, I posted a large packet (clearly labelled) to the correct address in Mayfair, W.1., stamped with a 70p stamp.

The packet never arrived, because the Post Office, in its wisdom, took W.1. to be the West Indies. On its arrival in the West Indies, the postal authorities there discovered that there was no such place as Mayfair, and promptly redispatched it to Wisconsin.

My packet, rather the worse for wear, was returned to me yesterday by the Post Office, still unable to find Mayfair, W.1.

Yours faithfully,
HARRY GANZ,
The Garden Pharmacy,
119 Long Acre, WC2.
March 6.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 7: His Excellency Mr Norman Penke was received in audience by The Queen and presented the Letters of Recall of his predecessor and his own Letters of Credence as Ambassador from the Republic of Latvia to the Court of St James's.

Mrs Penke was also received by Her Majesty.

Sir John Coles (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) was present.

The Duke of Edinburgh, President Emeritus, World Wide Fund for Nature — WWF International, today carried out a field visit with the Whale and Dolphin Society of Oman.

This evening His Royal Highness was received at the Palace by Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, Sultan of Oman.

March 7: The Duke of York, President, this evening attended the Royal Household Golf Society Annual Dinner at Twickenham Rugby Football Ground, Middlesex.

March 7: The Prince Edward, Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Foundation, this morning attended a meeting with the Chairman of the Congressional Award before attending a Duke of Edinburgh's Award World Fellowship Luncheon at the Union Club, New York.

This afternoon His Royal Highness travelled to Lewisburg, West Virginia, and this evening attended a Duke of Edinburgh's Award World Fellowship Dinner at the Greenbrier Hotel, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

March 7: The Princess Royal this morning opened the Midlands Engineering Centre, Cambridge Street, Birmingham, for the Institution of Electrical Engineers, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of West Midlands (Mr Robert Taylor).

Her Royal Highness this afternoon opened the new Design and Engineering Centre at the Rover Group Research Centre, Gaydon, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Warwickshire (Mr Martin Dunne).

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 7: The Prince of Wales this morning arrived at Royal Air Force Brize Norton from Saudi Arabia.

Lieutenant-Commander John Lavery RN and Miss Sandy Henney were in attendance.

YORK HOUSE
March 7: The Duke of Kent, President, the Royal Institution of Great Britain, this evening attended a Discourse given by Professor Robin Clark, at Albemarle Street, London W1.

Royal engagements

TODAY:
The Princess Royal, as President of Save the Children Fund, will attend the West Midlands appeal gala dinner and dance at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham, at 7.15.

Roy Bennett

A memorial service for Roy Grissell Bennett, CMG, TD, will be held at St James's Church, Piccadilly on Tuesday, March 18, 1997 at 2.30pm.

Mr L.P. Dutton

A Memorial Service for the life of Mr L.P. Dutton, MA, MBE, will be held in Giggleswick School Chapel on Saturday, March 22, 1997, at 2.30pm.

School news

Harrow School

1997 Scholarships

The following awards have been made:

Scholarships: M.C. Lesslie (Caldicott); M.H. Lawrence (Caldicott); Y.C.E. Ngai (Caldicott); J. Friedman (Papplewick).

Exhibitions: A.H.W. Crawley (Caldicott); J.H.W. Stewart (Tower House).

Music Scholarships: J.G.R. Dashwood (Westbourne House); M.H. Lawrence (Caldicott); B.W.E. Morgan (Hazlegrove House); T.B. Rogers (Lockers Park); J. Friedman (Papplewick).

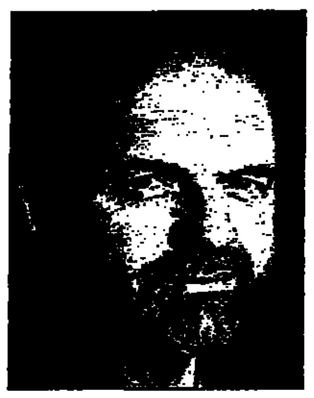
Music Exhibitions: A.M. Lea-Cox (St John's College, South Africa); B.W. Kilpatrick (Westbourne House).

Art Scholarship: S. Datta (The Hall).

Riddlesworth Hall School

Mr David Dean, currently at Le Rosey, Switzerland, will take up his appointment as Head of Riddlesworth Hall School in September 1997.

Weekend birthdays



Robert Tear, the tenor, is 58 today

TODAY: Major-General Sir Christopher Airy, royal equerry, 63; Mr Nicolas Bevan, Speaker's Secretary, 55; Mr Gyles Brandreth, MP, 49; Sir Julian Bullard, diplomat, 69; Professor Sir Donald Campbell, former president, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 67; Sir Anthony Caro, sculptor, 73; Mr Phil Edmonds, cricketer, 46; Mr Michael Grade, chief executive, Channel 4, 54; the Hon Douglas Hurd, CH, MP, 67; Mr Michael Inchbald, designer, 77; Miss Ann Jenner, ballerina, 53; Mr Irek Mukhamedov, ballet dancer, 37; Miss Lynn Redgrave, actress, 54; Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi, 49; Miss Lynn Seymour, ballerina, 58; Professor S.K. Smith, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 46; Professor Norman Stone, modern historian, 56; the Ven P.R. Turner, Chaplain-in-Chief, RAF, 55; Mr John Ward, MP, 72; Mr David Wilkie, swimmer, 43.

TOMORROW: Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin, 57; Mr Bill Beaumont, sports broadcaster and writer, 45; Mr Andrew Bennett, MP, 58; Dr M.G. Brock, former warden, St George's House, Windsor Castle, 77; M André Courreges, fashion designer, 74; Mr Herbert Coutts, Head of Museums and Galleries, City of Edinburgh Council, 53; the Hon Sir Roualeyn Cumming-Bruce, former Lord Justice of Appeal, and his twin brother Lord Thurlow, 85; Mr Bobby Fischer, chess player, 54; Mr John Golding, trade unionist, 66; Major-General J.P. Groom, former director-general, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, 68; Mr Neil Hamilton, MP, 48; Professor Sir Donald Harrison, laryngologist and otologist, 72; Dr T.L. Johnston, former Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Heriot-Watt University, 70; General Sir Frank King, 78; Sir Norman Lindop, former Principal, British School of Osteopathy, 76; Mr R.G. Martin, company chairman, 76; Mr David Matthews, composer, 54; Sir Ronald Melville, civil servant, 85; Sir Nicholas Monck, civil servant, 62; Professor K.E. Robinson, former Vice-Chancellor, Hong Kong University, 83; Mr Howard Shelley, concert pianist and conductor, 47; the Right Rev James Simpson, former Moderator, General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 63; Professor Sir David Weatherall, FRS, haematologist, 64; Mr David Willetts, MP, 41.

Dinners

City University
Sir John Leahy, Pro-Chancellor of the City University, presided at a convocation dinner held last night at the university. Mr Stuart Devlin, Prime Warden of the Goldsmiths' Company, was the guest speaker. The Vice-Chancellor and Mrs Franklin and Mr Robert W. Chappell, chairman of convocation, attended.

Kent Temple Society
Judge Giles Rooke, QC, Residing Judge, Canterbury, was the guest of honour at a dinner of the Kent Temple Society held last night at The Chaucer Hotel, Canterbury. Mr Nigel J. Mifsud, president, and Mr Matthew Hinxman, treasurer, presided. Brigadier C. Wright, Under Treasurer of the Middle Temple, Mr Geoffrey Nice, QC, Mr Per Laleng and Miss Charlotte Bircher were among the guests.

Lecture

English-Speaking Union
Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, Minister for Overseas Development, delivered the Dr Britton lecture to the Bristol branch of the English-Speaking last night at Clifton College Preparatory School. Mr Tony Williams, Chairman of the Bristol branch, introduced the speaker and Mrs Valerie Mitchell, Director of the ESU.

Anniversaries

TODAY
BIRTHS: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, composer, Weimar, Germany, 1714; Richard Howe, Earl Howe, admiral, London, 1726; Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*, Edinburgh, 1859; Frederic William Goudy, typographer, Bloomington, Illinois, 1865.

DEATHS: King William III, reigned with Mary II 1689-94, then alone to 1702, London, 1702; Abraham Darby, iron founder, Worcester, 1717; Hector Berlioz, composer, Paris, 1869; Henry Ward Beecher, preacher, Brookline, Massachusetts, 1887; John Ericsson, pioneer of the screw propeller, New York, 1889; Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, airship constructor, Charlottenburg, Germany, 1917; Sir Thomas Beecham, conductor, London, 1961; ; Harold Lloyd, film comedian, Beverly Hills, 1971; Richard Austen Butler, politician, Great Yeldham, Essex, 1982; Sir William Walton, composer, Ischia, 1983.

Accession of Queen Anne (reigned until 1714), 1702.

The February revolution began in Russia (ending on March 14), these dates being in the New Style Gregorian calendar, 1917.

American Marines landed in Vietnam, 1965.

An artificial heart was used for the first time on a 41-year-old man which kept him alive for 80 minutes, 1952.

TOMORROW
BIRTHS: Amerigo Vespucci, explorer, Florence, 1451; William Cobbett, essayist and politician, Farnham, Surrey, 1763; Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary 1945-51, Winsford, Somerset, 1881; Vyacheslav Molotov, statesman, Kukaida, Vyatka, 1890; Victoria Sackville-West, novelist and biographer, Knole Castle, Kent, 1892; Samuel Barber, composer, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1910; Yuri Gagarin, first astronaut to orbit the Earth 1961, Smolensk, 1934.

DEATHS: David Rizzio, favourite of Mary Queen of Scots, murdered, Edinburgh, 1566; Jules Mazarin, cardinal and statesman, Vincennes, France, 1661; Arnold Toynbee, social philosopher, London, 1883; William I, German Emperor 1871-88, Berlin, 1888.

Napoleon Bonaparte married Josephine de Beauharnais, 1796.

The French Foreign Legion, with its headquarters in Algeria, was founded, 1831.

Accession of Frederick III, German Emperor, 1888.

British police deported Archbishop Makarios from Cyprus to the Seychelles for fostering terrorism, 1956.

Service dinners

Royal Marines
Major-General John Hardy presided at the annual dinner of the Royal Marines Officers' Dinner Club held last night at Lincoln's Inn. Sir Maurice Drake, Major-General Dennis Shaw, the Rev David Burgess and Captain Malcolm Carver, RN, were among the guests.

The Red Rose Club
Officers of the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry dined out Major General Sir Michael Palmer, KCVO, and held their annual Red Rose Dinner on Friday at Kearsley House, Wigan. Brigadier E.C.W. Morrison, Honorary Colonel, presided. Major General J.P.W. Friedberger, Colonel P.A. Clare and representatives of the Lancashire Lieutenancy, the Duchy of Lancaster, *HMS Lancaster*, the King's Royal Hussars, the Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were among those present.

RAF St Athan
Air Chief Marshal Sir John Allison, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Logistics Command, and Lady Allison were the guests of honour at the St David's Day (March 1) ladies guest night held last night at RAF St Athan. Wing Commander John Sneller presided. Group Captain the Rev I. Thomas, Logistics Command Chaplain, was the guest speaker. Air Commodore Peter Scott, Air Officer Wales, and Mrs Scott were present.

No1 MHU (RAuxAF)
Group Captain L. Robins presided at a reunion dinner of past and present officers of No1 Maritime Headquarters Unit (Royal Auxiliary Air Force) and their ladies held last night at Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea. Air Commodore the Hon Sir Peter Vanneck, Group Captain P. Harris, Wing Commander E. Partridge and Major A. Blackburn, RAMC (V), were among the guests.

University of Birmingham Air Squadron
Vice-Admiral I.D.G. Garnett, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, Air Vice-Marshal J.H. Thompson, Commandant RAF College Cranwell, and Professor D. Walton, of Birmingham University, were the guests of honour at the annual dinner of the University of Birmingham Air Squadron held last night at RAF Cosford. Squadron Leader K.S. Crombie, Commanding Officer, presided.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr W.S. Croom-Johnson and Miss D. Roberts
The engagement is announced between William, younger son of the late Mr and Mrs Henry Croom-Johnson, of Hammersmith, London, and Deborah, younger daughter of the late Mr Edward Roberts and of Mrs Ellen Roberts, of Burgess Hill, Sussex.

Squadron Leader J.N. Dart and Miss C.L. Mallinson
The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr and Mrs R. Dart, of Huntingdon, and Clare, daughter of the late Mr B. Mallinson and of Mrs S. Mallinson, of Torquay.

Mr A.J. Fairclough and Miss A. Hartmann
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mr and Mrs John Fairclough, of Copthorne, West Sussex, and Aleese, daughter of Mr and Mrs Charles B. Hartmann, of Palm Beach, Florida.

Captain N.F. Fane and Miss L.K.E. Schroder
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, eldest son of the late Mr Michael Fane and of Mrs Michael Fane, of Blackdown, Hampshire, and Leonie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Bruno Schroder, of London W8.

Mr A.R.W. Hughes and Miss N.J. Drake-Brockman
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Lieutenant Colonel O.W. Hughes, retd, and Mrs Hughes, of Putney, London, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs Gervase Drake-Brockman, of Hundon, Suffolk.

Mr D.M. Jackson and Miss R.C. Hughes
The engagement is announced between David, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Colin Jackson, of Ringmer, East Sussex, and Roslyn Christina, only daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Glyn Hughes, of Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex.

Mr I.A. Reynolds and Miss R.M. Muspratt
The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Austin Reynolds, of Dublin, Ireland, and Rosalind, daughter of Mr David Muspratt and the late Mrs Rosemary Muspratt, of Alresford, Hampshire.

Mr L.J. Kennedy and Miss R.E.M. Carson
The engagement is announced between Lance, only son of Mr and Mrs Joseph Kennedy, of Harare, Zimbabwe, and Robyn, daughter of Dr and Mrs Brian Carson, of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

Mr S.A. Kornberg and Miss T.M. Goh
The engagement is announced between Simon, younger son of Professor Sir Hans Kornberg, FRS, of Cambridge, England, and Boston, USA, and of the late Lady (Monica) Kornberg, and Tricia, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jimmy Goh, of Bukit Panjang, Singapore.

Mr A.D.S. Little and Miss K.L. Dawson
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mrs Elsa Little, of Old Lenton, Nottingham, and Kelly, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Derek J. Dawson, of Beverly Hills, California.

Mr J.D. Mant and Miss C.E. Jackson
The engagement is announced between Julian, son of Mr David Mant, of Symonds Yat, Gloucestershire, and Mrs Barbara Herring, of Co Kildare, Ireland, and Clare, daughter of Mr and Mrs Stuart Jackson, of Alhampton, Somerset.

Mr M.A. Rickard and Miss C.L. Major
The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr and Mrs John Rickard, of Canterbury, Kent, and Claire, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Colin Major, of Cherry Hinton, Cambridgeshire.

Mr D.J. Saunders and Miss R.E.W. Brinton
The engagement is announced between Duncan, son of Lieutenant Colonel David Saunders, retd, and Mrs Saunders, of Kidmore End, Berkshire, and Robyn, daughter of Mr Geoffrey Brinton, of Dubai, and Mrs Nancy Brinton, of Slindon, West Sussex.

Mr S.W. Turner and Miss C.V. Thornley
The engagement is announced between Stephen William, son of Mr and Mrs William Turner, of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, and Catherine Vivien, daughter of Dr and Mrs Ian A. Thornley, of Maidenhead, Berkshire.

Church services tomorrow

Fourth Sunday in Lent

ST ALBAN CATHEDRAL, Hertfordshire: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch, New English Hymnal, Brother James's Air (arr. Jacob), The Sub Dean; 11 Solemn Euch, Ave verum corpus (Wills); 6.30 E. The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford).

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 M. The Wilderness (Goss), The Archdeacon; 3.15 Choral E. Noble in B minor, O for a closer walk with God (Foster).

BANGOR CATHEDRAL: 8 Holy Euch; 9.45 Cymun Bendigaid; 11 Choral Litany & Euch, Darke in F, Lord we pray thee (Haydn), This is my commandment (Tallis); 4.30 Preach & Praise, The Bishop.

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch. One thing have I desired (Sumsion), Harwood in A flat, A Hymn to the Virgin (Britten); 3.30 Choral E. Harwood in A flat, Save us O Lord (Bairstow).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Brother James' Air (arr. Jacob), Sicut cervus (Palestrina), Rev A Green; 4 Choral E. Stanford in G, Canon M Tunnicliffe.

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 Choral M. Jesu joy of man's desiring (Bach), Canon Galilee; 10.30 Euch, Ireland in C, O nata lux (Tallis), The Provost; 4 Choral E. Hear my prayer (Mendelssohn), Canon Hindley.

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8, 11 Holy Euch, Plainsong, Canon R Williams; 3.30 E. Purcell in B flat, Remember O Lord what is come upon us (Walmisley).

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL, College Green: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Choral Euch, Set me as a seal (Walton), Canon A Redfern; 3.30 Choral E. Since by man came death (Handel), Canon P Johnson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M. When David heard that Absalom was slain (Weelkes); 11 S Euch & Confirmation, Collegium Regale (Darke), The Bishop of Maidstone; 3.15 E. Laudate pueri (Scarlatti); 6.30 Compline, The Archdeacon of Canterbury.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch. The Lamentation (Bairstow), Archdeacon D Turnbull; 3 E. Short Service (Farrant), Insanae et vanae curae (Haydn).

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon B Thompson; 9.30 Euch & Parade, Rev I Moody; 11 Choral M. Benedicite in B flat (Sumsion), O Lord look down (Battishill); 6 Choral E. St John's Service (Howells), Drop drop slow tears (Walton), Canon D Knight.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Euch. Short Service (Tallis), Jesu joy of man's desiring (Bach), Rev T Barker; 11.30 Choral M. Benedicite (Jackson in G), O most merciful (Bullock), Canon T Dennis; 3.30 Choral E. Fifth Service (Tomkins); ; 6.30 ES, Canon T Dennis.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M. Benedicite (Jackson in G), Lord for thy tender mercy's sake (Hilton); 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Palestrina), O saviour of the world (Ouseley), The Archdeacon of Chichester; 3.30 E. Chichester Service (Walton).

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M & Sermon, Miserere (Victoria), Canon Jeffery; 11.15 S Euch, Missa brevis (Berkeley), Tantum ergo (Duruflé), The Dean; 6 E. For five voices (Weelkes), O Lord look down (Battishill).

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP; 8 Communion; 10.30 Euch, Coventry Mass (Walker), Lift up your heads (Handel), Rt Rev A Priddis; 3 German Lutherans; 5 E. God be in my head (Rutter), Verse Service (Heath).

DERBY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.45 S Euch, Mozart in C, Hymn to the Mother of God (Tavener), Ven D Garnett; 6 Choral E. Laboravi in gemito (Caldara), Ven I Gatford.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, The Dean; 10 M. A Durham Canticle, The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley), Canon D Hodgson; 11.15 HC. Missa brevis (Leighton), Credo orbis factor, O nata lux (Tallis), Canon M Perry; 3.30 E. Crossing the bar (Westrup).

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC, Rev J Inge; 10.30 S Euch, Schubert in G, Ave Maria (Bruckner), The Lord Bishop; 3.45 E. Ave Maris stella (Grieg).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch. Hide not thou thy face (Farrant), Missa Brevis (Britten), Ave verum corpus (Elgar), Canon A Mawson; 11.15 M. The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley), The Dean; 3 E. Darke in F, The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford); 6.30 Evening, The Lord is my shepherd, Canon D Ison.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8, 12.15 HC; 10.15 Euch, Little Organ Mass (Haydn), Canon J de Sausmarez; 3 E. Collegium Regale (Wood in F), Blest pair of sirens (Parry).

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Rev J Clark; 9.45 S Euch, Litany (Loosemore), Missa Aeterna Christi Munera (Palestrina), Canon Dr M Palmer; 11.15 M. Benedicite in G (Jackson), *Cantique de Jean Racine* (Fauré), The Dean; 6.30 Evening Service for Mothering Sunday, Laudate Dominum (Mozart), Ven M Wilson.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Thou knowest Lord (Purcell), Missa Aeterna Christi munera (Palestrina); 11.30 Benedicite (Sumsion in B flat), Jubilate (Purcell in B flat), Lord we beseech thee (Batten); 3.30 E. Howells in B minor, O pray for the peace (Howells).

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 Euch, God be in my head (Davies), The Bishop; 4 Choral E. Sumsion in G, Hymn to the Mother of God (Tavener), Canon I Richards.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Bogoroditse Dyevo (Rachmaninov), Ave verum corpus (Byrd), The Chancellor; 3.30 E. Humfrey in E minor, Ave Maria (Parsons).

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 Family Communion, The People's Communion (Sumsion), Ave Maria (Saint-Saens), All I am will sing out (Hultgren), The Dean; 11.15 M. Benedicite in B flat (Marshall), The angel Gabriel; 3.45 E. The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford), Canon B Pearmain.

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 10.30 Euch; 3 Choral E; 4 HC.

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 9 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Missa brevis in F K192 (Mozart), The Lord is my shepherd (Schubert), The Archdeacon; 6.30 E. Thou knowest Lord (Purcell), The Dean.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.15 Family Communion; 10.30 S Euch, Darke in E, Ave verum corpus (Elgar), Canon R Hanmer; 3.30 E. Second Service (Byrd), Faire is the heaven (Harris), The Archdeacon of Lynn; 6.30 Healing & Reconciliation, Canon F Millett.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 9.30 M. Benedicite in F (Ashfield); 10.30 Euch, St Nicholas Mass (Haydn), The Chancellor; 3.30 E. The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley).

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch, Canon K Punshon; 8.45 M; 9.30 Euch & Flower Ceremony, For the beauty of the earth (Rutter), Canon M Glanville-Smith; 11.30 Choral Euch, Missa Pro Victoria (Victoria), Canon M Glanville-Smith; 12.30 Euch, Rev J Thorn; 3 Holy Baptism; 5.30 E. Durham Service (Lloyd), O nata lux de lumine (Tallis), Rev D Murfet.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M. Salvator Mundi (Howells), Vinea mea electa (Poulenc); 10.30 S Euch, Darke in E, Vinea mea electa (Poulenc), Canon J Armson; 3.15 E. Jehova quam multi sunt hostes (Purcell).

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Litany (Tallis), I sing of a maiden (Shephard), Canon J Osborne; 11.30 M. Lamentation (Bairstow), Hide not thou thy face (Farrant), Rev A Philip; 3 E. O Lord, Almighty God (Naylor).

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Palestrina), Agnus Dei II (Palestrina), Canon C Smith; 6.30 E & Sermon, Expectans Expectavi (Wood), Rev C Collins

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL: 9 Euch, Rev R White; 11 Choral Euch, Messe Solennelle (Vierne), Hear my prayer (Purcell), Prof J Barton; 3 Choral E. Murrill in E, Hear my prayer (Mendelssohn), Rev D Painter.

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 Communion; 9 M; 10 S Euch, Kyrie, Sanctus & Benedictus (Duruflé), Agnus Dei (Plainsong), Salvator Mundi (Tallis), The Librarian; 6 E. Hear my prayer (Purcell), The Dean.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, 9.15 Parish C. Litany to the Holy Spirit (Hurford), Canon I Knox; 11 Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor, Turn thy face from my sins (Attwood), Canon G Nairn-Briggs; 4 E and Installation of canon, *Let all the world (Vaughan Williams)*, The Bishop.

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Mas for four voices (Byrd), Ven R Acworth; 11.30 M. Love's endeavour love's expense (Rose); 3 E. The Second Service (Leighton), Lord let me know mine end (Greene), Rev A Appleby.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M. Short Service (Byrd), Salvator Mundi (Tallis), Canon D Hutt; 11.15 Euch, Missa brevis (Harvey), Call to remembrance (Farrant), A Litany (Walton), Sis. H Markey; 3 E. Victoria in the first tone, Christus factus est (Bruckner), Rev M Oakley; 5.45 Recital; 6.30 Evening, Rev J Goodall.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: 9 Family Mass; 10.30 Solemn Mass, Missa Sancta et immaculata (Guerrero), Salvator : mundi (Blow); 2.45 Recital; 3.30 Solemn V & B, Magnificat primi toni (Lassus), Hei mihi (Guerrero).

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 M. Benedictus in C (Stanford), O for a closer walk (Stanford), Rev C Stewart; 11.30 Euch, Misse Euge bone (Tye), Pradlumlum in D minor (Buxtehude); 3.30 E. Howells in B minor, Tebye poyem (Tchaikovsky), Rev A Walker.

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Leighton), Rev P Ferguson; 11.30 M. The Lamentation (Bairstow), Benedictus (Moore); 4 E. Eta Mater (Dvorak), Rev D Bailey.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Choral M, Ave Maris Stella (Grieg), Very Rev K Goulstone; 3.30 EP.

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Cymun Bendigaid, Y Deon; 9.30 Parish Euch; 11.15 Choral M. Agnus Dei (Rheinberger), The Succentor; 6 Choral E. Dyson in F, O Lord look down from heaven (Battishill), The Dean.

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon M Shaw; 10 S Euch, Canon R Addington, Sanderstead Service (How), Oldroyd in D, Faire is the heaven (Harris), Ave verum (Byrd); 11.30 HC, Rev R Davey; 3.30 Choral E. Tota pulchra es (Bruckner).

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, Southwark: 8, 10, 6 LM; 11.30 Solemn M. Mass in G (Haydn), Duo seraphim (Dering), Fr P Turner; 2 Ghanaian Mass; 5 Stations of the Cross.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 10.30 Euch. Mendelssohn Mass movements, The Provost; 3.30 Choral E. Purcell in G minor, Lord let me know mine end (Greene); 6.30 Compline; 8 Chapter House Choral Singers.

ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11 Morning, Rev R Frazer; 6 Evening, Rev D Molyneaux.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Palestrina), Hymn to the Mother of God (Tavener), Canon S Oliver; 3.15 E. Collegium Regale (Tavener), I love the Lord (Harvey), Rev Dr L Griffiths; 5 Recital.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy; 6 Vespers and Ritual of Forgiveness.

ALL SAINTS, Margaret Street, W1: 8, 5.15 LM; 11 HM. Mass in B flat (Schubert), The Vica; 6 E & B. Sumsion in A, Rev T Devonshire Jones.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, W1: 11 Mothering Sunday, Rev R Tice; 6.30 With All Souls Orchestra, Rev R Trist.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, W1: 11 Missa brevis in B flat, K275 (Mozart), Lord let me know mine end (Greene).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children; 11 M. Lord let me know mine end (Greene), Rev Dr P Elvy; 12.15 HC; 6 E, Rev Dr P Elvy.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH, Curzon St, *W1: 11 Sunday School.*

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Covent Garden, WC2: 11.15 Rev S Hood; 6.30 Rev S Hood.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30, 12.30, 4.15, 6.15 LM; 11 HM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 ASB HC, Rev S Millar; 11 Morning, Rev R Thorpe; 5, 7 Informal, Mr K Costa.

THE ORATORY, Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, Missa Scala Aretina (Valls), Laudate Dominum (Palestrina); 12.30, 4.30, 7 Mass; 3.30 V & B, Cantate Domino (Pitoni).

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH: Iverna Gdns, W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirian.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, City Road, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 Morning, Mothering Sunday, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SW1: 11 Mothering Sunday; 6.30 Special Services, Rev K Garner.

ST ANNE AND ST AGNES (Lutheran), Gresham St, EC2: 11 Choral Euch, Rev P Schmiege; 7 Lutheran Choral Vespers, Peter Krogull.

ST AUGUSTINE, 117 Queen's Gate, SW7: 8.30 HC; 11 HC, Missa Ave Maria (Palestrina), Ave Maria (Victoria).

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, Smithfield, EC1: 9 HC; 11 Family Euch, Missa Bell' amfitrit altera (Lassus), Ave Maria (Javi Busto), The Rector; 6.30 E. Fauxbourdons (Whitlock), Salve Regina (Obrecht), The Rector.

ST BRIDE'S, Fleet Street, EC4: 11 Choral M & Euch, Benedicite (Sumsion in D), Purcell in D, Lord let me know mine end (Parry), Canon J Oates; 6.30 Choral E. Magnificat/Nunc Dimittis (Purcell in E minor), Canon J Oates.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Choral Euch, Mass in G (Schubert), O sacrum convivum (Tallis), Rev A Davis.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, SW1: 11 Rev W Cairns; 6.30 Rev C MacLeod.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, Ely Place: 11 S Mass, Asperges Me (Victoria), Colloredo Mass (Mozart), Laudate Nomen Domini (Mendelssohn).

ST GEORGE'S, Hanover Square, W1: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Ireland in C, The Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 S Euch (1662), John Paul, Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Sussex Gardens, W2: 8 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Monteverdi), God so loved the world (Stainer), Rev A Meldrum; 6 Choral E. Short Service (Gibbons), Bow thine ear (Byrd).

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, S Robinson; 5.45 EP.

ST JOHN'S, Stratford E15: 11 Family, Trumpet Tune and Air (Purcell), Rev D Richards; 6.30 HC, Rev M Okello.

ST LUKE'S, Chelsea, SW3: 8 HC; 10.30 MP & HC, Let Propse, Rev C Kevill-Davies; 6.30 E. Give almes of thy goods (Tye), Sir R O'Brien.

ST MARK'S, Regents Park Rd, NW1: 10.30 Parish Euch, If you love me (Tallis), Geistliches Lied (Brahms), The Bishop of London.

ST MARGARET'S, Westminster, SW1: 11 S Euch, Missa Trinitatis Sancti (Grier), Libera nos, salve nos (Sheppard), Rev Dr P Bradshaw.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch, Rev A Hurst; 11.30 Visitors, Rev C Herbert; 2.45 Chinese, Rev G Lee; 6.30 Evening.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington W8: 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 Parish Euch, The Vicar; 11.15 Choral M, Rev F Gelli; 6.30 E, Mrs P Haines.

ST MARY'S, Bourne Street, SW1: 9, 10, 7 LM; 11 HM. Messa di Gloria (Puccini), Fr. S Young; 6 Solemn E & B.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, Primrose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Parish Euch, Missa l'hora passa (Viadana), O pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Howells), Rev J Ovenden; 6 EP, Prayers & Meditation.

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, W1: 8 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Mass (Libert), Holy is the true light (Harris), Rev T Clark.

ST MICHAEL'S, Cornhill, EC3: 11 Choral Service, Lamentation (Bairstow), Benedictus (Stainer in E flat), Remember now thy creator (Steggall), David Powell.

ST PAUL'S, Wilton Place, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 Solemn Euch, Missa in honorem Santa Maris Virgine (Zipoli), Ave Maria (Holst), Lift thine eyes (Mendelssohn), Rev N Dawson.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC, Rev P Abram; 11 M & Sermon, Benedictus (Harwood in A flat), O Lord God of my salvation (Blow), Rev P Abram.

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Faire is the heaven (Harris), Canon A Craig.

CHAPEL ROYAL, Hampton Court Palace: 8.30 HC (1662); 11 M, The Short Service (Gibbons), Behold as truly as God is our Father (Mathias); 3.30 E. Sans Day Carol (arr. Rutter).

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley Street, W1: 8.15 HC; 11 Sung Euch, Missa Eliensis, O Lord look down (Battishill), Jesus Christ Christus unser Heiland (Bach), Rev S Hobbs.

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 M, Benedicte (Naylor), O for the wings of a dove (Mendelssohn), Very Rev C Slee; 12.30 HC.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Benedicite omnia opera (Dyson in F), Benedictus (Dyson in F), O Lord Almighty God (Naylor), The Reader.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 M, O Lord increase my faith (Loosemore), The Lord is my shepherd (Schubert), Band of the Blues & Royals, Rev P Bosher; 12 HC.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SE10: 11 Mothering Sunday, Choral Euch, Dance in E flat, Ecce socer dos (Bruckner), Rev C French.

Crufts results

The following are the results from the second day of Crufts at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham:

Toy and Utility Groups

Affenpinscher: Ch Avantgarde Rebarbative: Miss J Gruninger, Potters Bar, Herts.
Griffon Bruxellois: Fennymore Spanking Good Time: Mr & Mrs P Mercer, Chorley, Lancs.
Italian Greyhound: Ch Saispa Salvador: Mr & Mrs J Hardcastle, Osset, W Yorks.
Lowchen: Ch Beaulion Brahms & Lizst: Mr P Scarth, Leeds.
Maltese: Ch Abbvat Cracklin Rose Snowgoose: Mrs V Herrieff, Woking, Surrey.
Pomeranian: Ch Cradarr Military Tattoo: Mrs P Wallace, Sheffield.
German Spitz (Mittel): Wyndlee The Crowman: Mr & Mrs P Beard, Selston, Notts.
Schipperke: Ch Frawnhowil Black Minstrel For Aradet: Miss M Deats, Thetford, Norfolk.
Schnauser: Ch Geistroll Othello At Tamberg: Mr & Mrs C Ogburn, Tattersall Bridge, Lincs.
Australian Silky Terrier: Ch Amron's TJ Bear Extraordinaire: Miss J Sharp, Rednal, Birmingham.
Bichon Frise: Fionavar Miss Kitty: Mr and Mrs J Reynolds, Redditch, Worcs.
English Toy Terrier: Pooghans Blade: Miss McCarthy, Bingham, Notts.
Miniature Pinscher: Kilmuir Goldencorn Gambler: Mrs H McLean, Lanarkshire.
Pekinese: Ch Stsanja Grand Finale at Yankee: Mr A Easdon, Glasgow.
Chow Chow: Ch Chowsan Made to Measure for Miketilia: Mrs E Cannon, Solihull, West Mids.
French Bulldog: Twinhoe Vernon, Mr C Blair, Bath, Avon.
Japanese Shiba Inu: Ch Vormund I'm Smartie: Mrs E Dunhill, Retford, Notts.
Japanese Spitz: Preshas Geisha Girl Over Lanteague: Mrs S Jones, Oxford.
Poodle (toy): Ch Valetta Love Affair: Miss V Dunn, Newport, Gwent.
Chihuihui (long coat): Yeosinga Ria at Ballybroke: Mr and Mrs G Foote, Burgess Hill, West Sussex.
Japanese Chin: Vival Shuji Tamura: Mrs E Tappenden, Salisbury, Wilts.
German Spitz (Klein): Lireva's Minnah The Minx at Wentgarth: Mrs F Baird, Dorset.
Japanese Akita: Manashay's Royal Heritage at Redwitch: Mr S Kinghorn, East Lothian.
Poodle (miniature): Ch Roxville The Cool Dude at Glynpedr: Messr Boatwright and Williams, Stechford, Birmingham.
Char-Pei: Samsara Last Edition at Wanchai: Mr and Mrs P Highland, Rochester, Kent.
Tibetan Terrier: Ch Hotang Heruka of Willowbrae: Mrs J Robin-Smith, North Chailey, East Sussex.
Chihuihui (smooth coat): Ch Diella Pretty In Pink: Mrs E Lunney, Welling, Kent.
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel: Trirayne Alexius the Great: Mrs P Raynor, High Wycombe, Bucks.
King Charles Spaniel: Ch Tewhit Traidmarc: Mrs B Plews, Doncaster, South Yorks.
Papillon: Ch Tussalud Storyteller: Mrs K Stewart, Barton-le-Clay, Beds.
Pug: Ch Marrinavale Mignonette: Miss K Cooper, Torquay, Devon.
Boston Terrier: Ch Lovece Star Performer: Mrs S Borthwick, Mid Lothian.
Bulldog: Ch Ocobo Tully: Mrs P Davis, Kings Lynn, Norfolk.
Canaan Dog: Kibutzer Qween in Kofyn: Miss M Vincent, Strencham, Worcestershire.
Keeshond: Ch Deminiac Mustang Sally: Mrs E Wogan, Wicklow, Eire.
Leonberger: Manorguard Away We Go To Gocolda: Mr and Mrs D Rushby, Glossop, Derbyshire.
Tibetan Spaniel: Inglespan Razzamatazz for Langshi: Mrs J Carter, Marlborough, Wilts.
Chinese crested: Glebeheath the Gentleman: Mrs J Guvercin, Swindon, Wilts.
Yorkshire Terrier: Ch Ozmilion Mystification: Mr O Sameja, London.
Dalmatian: Ch Playing Again at Shantax: Mr M Easey, Romford, Essex.
Poodle (standard): Ch Shangrila's Saint 'n Sinner: Mrs E Weir, Hamilton, Scotland.
Miniature Schnauzer: Chansen's Toyboy at Caskayd: Mr and Mrs S Wareing, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.
Shih-tzu: Ch Emrose Michelin Man: Mrs J Howells, Llanelli, Dyfed.

Latest wills

Claude **Weatherell**, of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire left estate valued at £1,079,528 net.

Olive Jessie **Birkin**, of Coggeshall, Colchester, Essex, left estate valued at £1,058,512 net.

She left £1,000 each to St Peter ad Vincula Church, Coggeshall, the NSPCC and St Helena Hospice, Colchester.

Sandra Ann **Lambarth**, of West Hanningfield, Chelmsford, Essex, left estate valued at £1,794,127 net.

Evelyn Eileen **Robertson**, of West Chiltington, West Sussex, left estate valued at £1,389,140 net.

Christopher **Barker**, of Winchester, Hampshire, left estate valued at £1,784,196 net.

He left £1,000 to St John the Baptist church, Winchester; £500 each to Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, RSPCA, Haileybury Society, Winchester Cathedral Music Fund and Friends of the Cathedral; £200 each to Friends of Winchester Hospitals, British Red Cross, NSPCC and Royal UK Beneficent Association.

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It was not on any human initiative that prophecy came; rather it was under the compulsion of the Holy Spirit that people spoke as messengers of God. 2 Peter 1 : 21

BIRTHS

AGARWAL - On March 3rd at The Portland Hospital, to Nalini (née Chatcani) and Manoj, a daughter, a sister for Rishika.

AVERY - On March 5th, to Philippa (née Hancock) and Christopher, a son, James Christopher Henry, a brother for Camilla, Emily and Isabel.

BALMFORTH - On March 3rd, to Claire (née Tompkins) and Marcus, a beautiful daughter, Fenella Natasha, a sister for Benjamin.

BASSETT - At Ronkswood Hospital, Worcester on Tuesday 4th March 1997, to Yvonne (née Wheeler) and Peter, a son, Alexander James Frank.

BOTTOMLEY - On 5th March 1997 at Guy's Hospital, to Nieves (de Vicente Carnicero) and Henry, a son, Edward Enrique.

CLARK - On January 26th, to Helen (née See) and Ewan, a daughter, Amy Elizabeth.

CRAWFORD - On 12th February, to Sylvia (née Brown) and Barry, a son, Adam Gilbert Thompson, a brother for Jonathan and Emma.

HACKET PAIN - On 29th January, to Elizabeth and Nicholas, a daughter, Emma Edith Wenllian, a sister for Wyndham.

BIRTHS

HALL - On 31st January 1997 at Watford General Hospital, to Beverley (née Bastin) and Laurence, a beautiful daughter, Adelle Zarah, a sister for Krystina.

HOWELL - On March 4th at The Portland Hospital, to Susan Clayton and Chris Howell, a son, Colin Clayton Howell, a brother for Jason.

HUGHES - To Ruth (née Morley) and Nicholas, a son, Russell David Glyn, born 12th January 1997, Hampstead, a brother for Olivia and Eleanor.

JEFFREYS - On March 2nd, to Suzanne (née Witherick) and Simon, a son, Edward George, a brother for Henry.

KAMARIS - On March 4th at The Portland Hospital, to Michael and Rosa, a daughter, Spyroulla, a sister for Andrea.

MORRIS - On February 20th 1997, to Mark and Julia, a daughter, Holly Grace.

NICHOLLS - On March 6th, to Emma (née Norton) and Stephen, a daughter, Hannah Victoria.

RANDLE - On 22nd February in Bulawayo, to Brigitte and William, a daughter, Lucy Eleanor, a sister for Georgina, Jack and Mathilda.

RAY - On March 5th, to Elspeth (née Partridge) and Simon, a son, Mark Andrew.

ROBERTSON - On February 28th at The Portland Hospital, to Mireille and Struan, a son, Nicolas, a brother for Alexander.

ROOS-MORDKOVITCH - On March 2nd at The Portland Hospital, to Ilana and Nick, a daughter, Tatjana, a sister for Juliette.

SCOPES - On 25th February, to Susanna and Graham, a beautiful daughter Gabriella Jayne, a sister for Andrew.

SOMERVILLE-SCOTT - Teresa, Daniel and Mary are delighted to announce the birth of Theodore Tristan John on 5th March at Queen Charlotte's Hospital.

VAN DEN OORT - On March 5th at Queen Mary's, Sidcup, to Philippa (née Catton) and René, a son, Maximilian Jacobus Matheus.

DEATHS

BARRINGER - Arthur Thomas died on March 5th at home in Reading, aged 76. Beloved husband of Mary, much loved father of Martin and Belinda, father-in-law of Mike and devoted grandfather of Rachel and Tessa.

DEATHS

BRYANT - Dennis Isard. On Thursday 6th March after a short illness borne with fortitude, optimism and dignity. Beloved husband of Eleanor. Sadly missed by his family and friends. Funeral at Gt Barton Church on Thursday 13th March at 3pm followed by cremation. No flowers. Donations if desired to Easterford Lodge Building Fund sent c/o L. Folcher, 80 Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1NX.

BURNE - On 6th March, 1997, peacefully in hospital, Wilfrid (Wilf) Priest. Beloved husband of Joan. Funeral at Salisbury Cathedral on Wednesday 12th March, 1997 at 11.30 am. Family flowers only, but donations if desired for Church Mission Society c/o I.N. Newman Ltd, Griffin House, 55 Winchester Street, Salisbury, Wilts, SP1 1HL.

KADLEIGH - Lesbia Mary. Peacefully at home on March 5th. Beloved wife of Sergei, Mother of William and last surviving Grandchild of Sir William Church Bart. Funeral Service to be held at the Russian Orthodox Church, University Road, Clifton, Bristol, on Wednesday March 12th at 9.30am followed by committal at the Kensington Cemetery at Gunnersbury, Ealing, West London at 1.30pm. Flowers to be delivered the preceding day to L.J. Guyan Funeral Directors, 12 Charlton Road, Keynsham, Bristol, tel: 0117 986 3268.

KIRKUP - On March 5th suddenly Norman Lawrence aged 72 years of Ilkley, West Yorkshire. The dearly loved husband of Jo, loving father of Tim and Tom, father-in-law of Sarah and Heather and devoted grandfather of Christopher, Lucy and Alice. Service at Rawdon Crematorium on Thursday March 13th at 10.30 am. No flowers please. If desired donations would be appreciated for the N.S.P.C.C. A plate will be provided at the funeral service or may be sent c/o Christopher Binns, Tower Chapel, Golden Butts Road, Ilkley, LS29 8HS.

MINTY - Doris on 4th March aged 86 after a brave battle against cancer. Sadly missed by her family Janet, Tom and Rebecca, David and Gemma. Enquiries to Farnham Funeral Service, Surrey, (01252) 711444.

PAYNTON - On 1st March 1997, Olive Constance Paynton M.B.E., of Lewes, East Sussex and formerly of Hampstead. Beloved mother of David and Joanna. Cremation at Golders Green (West Chapel) on Friday 14th March at 12 noon. Flowers if desired or donations to Christian Aid c/o Cooper & Son, 42 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2DD. (01273) 475557.

REED - Doris Emma on March 6th at Hazelmere House Nursing Home, aged 89. Loving mother of Hubert and Graham and much loved grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral Service at St Andrew's Church, Church Road, Hove, on Tuesday 11th March at 11.15 am. Family flowers but donations if desired to charity of donor's choice.

SCHOLEFIELD-ALLEN - On March 5th, peacefully in Monmouth Hospital, Monm, aged 95 years. Wife of the late Sidney Scholefield-Allen, Q.C. M.P. and mother of John and David. Funeral Service at St Mary's Church, Monmouth on Wednesday 12th March at 12.30 pm followed by private cremation. No flowers please. Enquiries to David Stockwell, Funeral Director, Monmouth.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

GAVHURE - Kundai. In loving memory of our dearest son, always in our hearts. Mummy and Baba.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

SENTA MARNAU - 9th March, 1985: Qu' importe-t-il si le vase est brisée, puisque Jésus est consolé, et puisque le monde se trouve, malgré lui, obligé de sentir les parfums qui en découlent, parfums qui servent à purifier l'air empoisonné que le monde ne cesse de respirer?

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EXHIBITIONS

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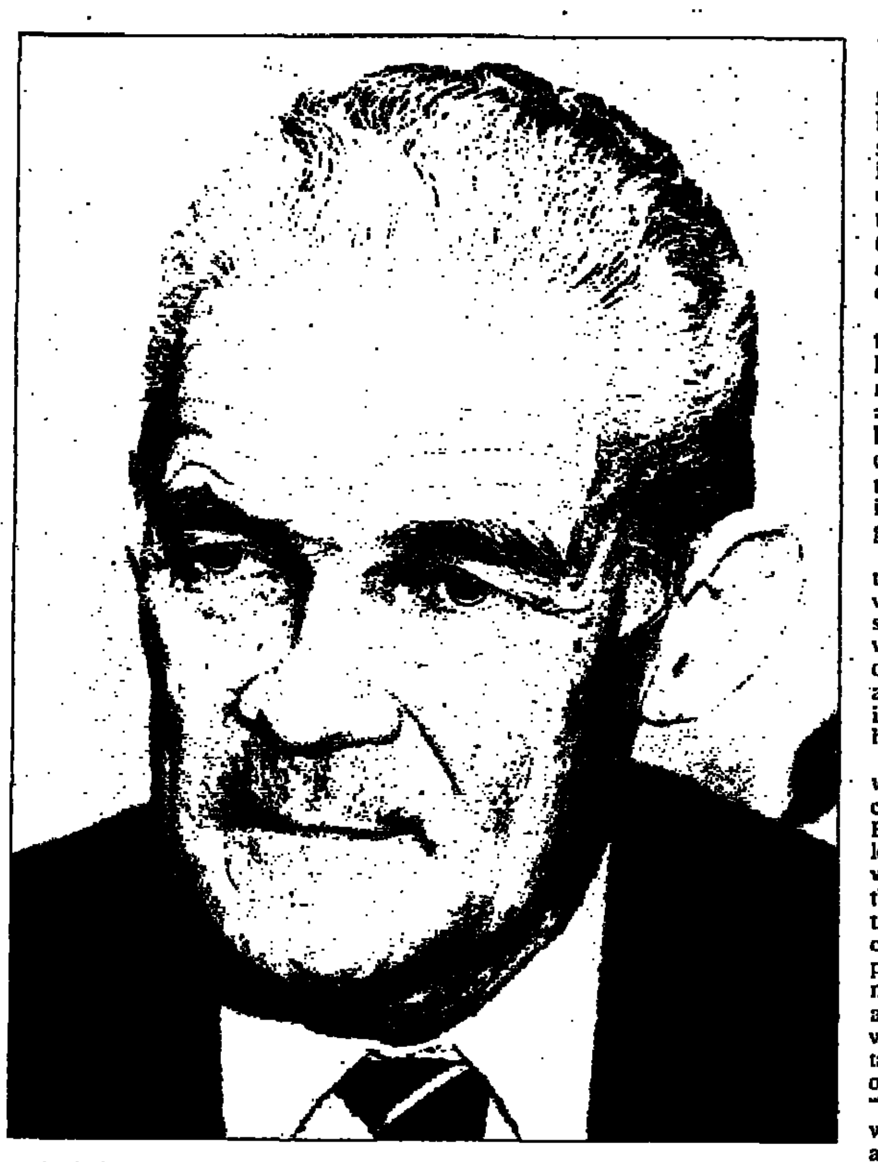


Michael Manley, PC, Prime Minister of Jamaica, 1972-80, and 1989-92, died yesterday in Kingston, Jamaica, aged 72. He was born in St Andrew, Jamaica, on December 10, 1924.

Three times elected Prime Minister of an independent Jamaica, Michael Manley was initially a hardline socialist, who forged close links with Fidel Castro and was a champion of the Non-Aligned Movement. But his electoral defeat by the conservative Edward Seaga in 1980 changed his perception of what was likely to be good for his country.

By the time he faced up to re-election in 1989, the rhetoric had changed completely, abandoned along with the Castro-esque bush jacket. Private investment and good relations with the US were now on the agenda. With the economy in poor shape he trounced Seaga to gain a third term as Jamaica's Prime Minister. Charismatic, tall and handsome, he was often called "Joshua" after the Old Testament prophet.

Michael Norman Manley came from a dynasty of artistic and political talent. His father, Norman Washington Manley, was the first Prime Minister of Jamaica before independence, and the founder of the People's National Party (PNP). The founder and leader of the rival Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) William Alexander Clarke, better known as Alexander Bustamante, was a cousin.

His mother, Edna Manley, was a sculptor of international renown. His father Norman was to become one of the most distinguished barristers in the Caribbean. Both became committed, in the Depression of the 1930s, which hit Jamaica very hard, to the struggle for workers' rights and for universal suffrage.

Michael Manley was educated at a leading school of the island, Jamaica College in Kingston. His parents' influence was deep and all-round and guided his interest in music (Manley was passionately fond of classical music), art, literature and politics.

In 1943 Manley left Jamaica College and, like so many other middle-class West Indian young men, volunteered for service as aircrew — in his case with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He did not like Canada (he was in Quebec, and rebelled against the then bigoted Catholicism of the province) and arrived in London in late 1945 to study at the London School of Economics. He went little to classes, but attended some lectures. Most time was spent at art galleries, and at the Wigmore and Albert Halls. He found his economic textbooks dry and dull and withdrew for a year to the fishing village of St Agnes in Cornwall to read literature and study Latin.

He then returned to the LSE, where he fell under the spell of Harold Laski, whose student, in the Department of Government, he became. He always considered Laski's teaching a model thereafter.

Following his graduation in economics he did some work as a freelance journalist in London, both for *The Observer* and The BBC Overseas Service. He returned to Jamaica in December 1951, to work as a journalist on the weekly *Public Opinion*, and from 1952 to 1972 as a trade union organiser.

Like so many other aspects of Jamaican life, by that time the union movement was polarised between the supporters of the People's National Party whose labour arm was the National Workers' Union (NWU) and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and its Bustamante Industrial Trades Union (BITU).

Manley found, as he recorded in his book *A Voice From the Workplace*, a society where "class relations were stark in their intolerance. There was no subtlety, and little mobility because a man's class was stamped upon his skin as much as upon his clothes. To middle-class eyes the working classes were an opaque mass — without individuality and without rights — because they were without humanity."

Manley went everywhere around the island with a loudspeaker van. He began to develop his extraordinary powers of oratory. Later, in the 1970s, there were many who thought he got carried away by them, and said things which he would later regret.

In the Jamaica of the resonant word, a society where the sonorities of the King James Bible continue to be appreciated — Rastafarians will read no other version of the Old Testament — his cast of mind combined culture and politics at a fundamental level. At a strike at the Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation (JBC), during the period from 1962 to 1972 of a JLP Government, Manley and the NWU demonstrated outside the JBC. Speaking to his followers, Manley pointed to the building: "There are the walls of Jericho". From one in the crowd came the response: "It Joshua who speaks!"

From then on, he was, effectively, Joshua, a notion which served him marvellously when he succeeded his father in February 1969 as president and leader of the PNP (his father had been terminally ill since October the previous year).

A month later he stated his programme to the party conference. He said it was a search for equality which widespread unemployment denied. It was for true national independence, which meant wresting the commanding heights of the economy from foreign control. There must be the politics of participation, at all levels, for both sexes, and corruption must be eliminated from the electoral system. Above all, there must be a sense of national identity.

But Manley failed to adequately comprehend that, aided by the breakdown of traditional values seen all over the world, a particularly violent strain of evil was brewing in Kingston's terrible slums.

Jamaica did try to respond to his message. It was, so many felt, time to break the mould and to build a new society based on the realities of Jamaica as it was for the masses. His successful 1972 election campaign was a personal triumph for "Joshua and for his Rod of Correction" with 56 per cent of the votes cast and 37 out of the 53 seats in the House of Representative

Manley at first began rather conventionally, but as he moved in to implement his programme he met a determined resistance from the traditional managerial class in Jamaica. The Government began to spend massively in work-creating programmes and it became plain that although Manley was a wonderful inspirer he was not one for the details of government.

His critics, who were increasing, were to say that if he defined a problem he would think he had solved it. But Manley saw things in a world context. He was wanting to see a new world economic order established, and he had a vision about Jamaica and the developing world in general, unrealitistic though it might have been.

In his Cabinet and among advisers were old friends of an often more conventional and gradualist turn of mind. But in the 1960s radical Black Power and leftist ideology had created a power base within the academics of the University of the West Indies at Mona near Kingston, the capital. They found allies among some of the activists in the PNP, and soon in parliament and Cabinet. Some were to move in on the ministries and special agencies that Manley created, often wearing Afro-type clothes and Rastafarian-style knitted, multicoloured caps or tams (they were wittily dubbed the "Tampacks" by some Jamaicans). They were to make civil servants' lives a misery and generally added to the administrative confusion.

Manley was goaded and led by his ready and witty tongue to appeal to Jamaican pride and nationalism by slogans such as "we are not for sale". His people responded rapturously, and in 1976 he again scored a huge victory at the polls, with 56.8 per cent of the votes.

It appeared to be a massive vote of support for the the PNP and its programme of democratic socialism, but severe economic deterioration set in. Both Manley's and Jamaica's pride resisted the ultimate solution — an IMF-imposed economic programme. There were cutbacks. The poor, the workers and the women suffered, as the work creation programmes and the public payrolls were cut. Many items of food, particularly imported staples, disappeared from shops and supermarkets.

The IMF and the CIA were blamed for the sea of troubles which now engulfed Jamaica. Washington and Kingston were often at loggerheads, largely because of Manley's warm relations with Fidel Castro. But Cuba was Jamaica's nearest neighbour and Manley refused to condemn Cuba for its armed support of the liberation struggle in southern Africa, particularly in Angola.

In February 1980 it was found impossible to reach a new agreement with the IMF, and the Government prepared for an election as soon as the new register was ready. In March 1980 an election was called, the bloodiest in Jamaica's history. It included the murder for the first time of a parliamentary candidate. The murder rate for that year went unsurpassed until 1996.

After that defeat, there were eight years of JLP rule. Manley's mother Edna died in 1987, and in that year he fell severely ill with diverticulitis. But the polls from 1985 onwards had favoured the PNP; Manley was considered — as he was — a humane, likeable man, with immense sympathy for the underdog and the worker.

On February 9, 1988, he was returned to power. He now presented himself as a moderate, though energetic, reformer advocating a limited government involvement in the economy which was to be led by the private sector. Much in the state sector was set down for privatisation. Not for nothing had Manley written: "I am grateful that God has given me the kind of mind that does not assume that what I thought I knew yesterday was an eternal guarantee of truth."

In March 1992 he resigned in office, being succeeded by the present Prime Minister, J. P. Patterson, who has carried on with these policies. Manley struggled with prostate cancer, which was diagnosed six years ago, and, though it was kept in check for a whole by radiation treatment, he eventually died at home.

Manley was five times married. He leaves a widow, Glynne Ewart, whom he married in 1992. From his marriages he had five children, three daughters and two sons.

PHILIP POLLOCK

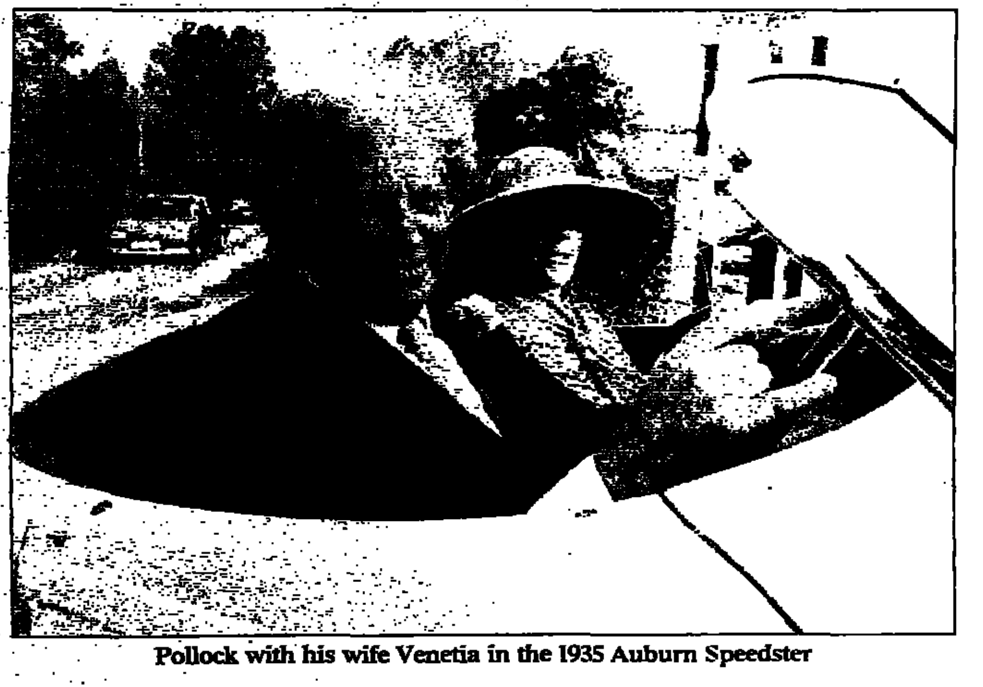
Philip Pollock, entrepreneur, died on February 15 aged 70. He was born on June 20, 1926.

ENTREPRENEUR *and* bon viveur, Philip Pollock loved working with, and backing, creative people. He had a flair for detecting coming things and ample means for the fostering of them. As a businessman he was enthusiastic, affable, frank and insightful, with dedicated employees.

Philip Samuel Pollock was born in London and educated at Canford. His father, also something of an entrepreneur, was the owner of several pubs, a greyhound track and the cinema at Marble Arch. With a boyish passion for the cinema, Pollock left school at 16 in order to work as a clapper-boy at Ealing Studios. He did his war service in the Fleet Air Arm where, with an eye on Ealing, he joined the Film Unit.

On being demobbed he returned to Ealing. His mother thought the film world unsuitable and bought her son the company Best Tyres. By the mid-1950s the company had become one of the largest tyre chains in southern England. Pollock sold out to Kennings and became today's equivalent of a multi-millionaire.

He was now able to give his creative side a free rein. He set up his own furniture company, Aerofoam, making bespoke furniture to his own



Pollock with his wife Venetia in the 1935 Auburn Speedster

designs and introducing one of the best-loved icons of the early 1960s — the sag-bag.

In 1962 his love of vintage cars led to the creation, with Edward Montagu (Lord Montagu of Beaulieu), of the still-thriving Vintage Tyre Supplies. Having cannily retained Best Tyre's vintage tyre division Pollock set about reviving the production by Dunlop and others of many tyre sizes that had been discontinued. Without his foresight institutions such as the London to Brighton Run would have come to an end.

In 1964, with Terence Conran, Conran's wife Caroline and Pagan Taylor, he co-founded Habitat. At the same time he had an interest, briefly, in the running of The Establishment with Peter Cook and he supported Bernard and Laura Ashley with Boys, their first shop.

His early interests in entertainment were rekindled in the mid-1980s, when bids were invited for the franchise of an independent radio station in Portsmouth. His consortium, the first of its kind, was successful and Pollock became chairman of Ocean Sound, a company that was later to grow into Southern Radio. He was also involved in the setting up of Lincs FM.

He was, however, a far from dedicated entrepreneur. Once a company became large, popular and successful, he lost interest. His own tremendous capacity for friendship sometimes affected his business acumen. He had, for example, an innocent (and misplaced) belief that a friend would never stab him in the back.

To many of his friends — and he was the most loyal of friends — he was the embodiment of Mr Toad. A big, ebullient, quick-tempered man with a loud laugh and a childlike aptitude for pleasure, he displayed the wildest enthusiasm for fast cars and yachts, rich food, copious drink and too many cigarettes, fine furniture, entertainment, the visual arts and travel. It was while partying and night-clubbing as a young man with his oldest friend, the architect Bob Chapman, that he met many of the talented architects, illustrators and designers of the day.

In 1957 he married Venetia Brewis, a distinguished publishers' editor. Her career introduced him to the literary world where he made even more friends, among them biographers, political commentators and historians. He became the proud father of three children with a large, hospitable farmhouse near Lymington. He took a mooring on the Beaulieu River and commissioned the first yacht to be built at Bucklers Hard since the war — a wooden Folkboat called *Schiehallion*. In 1977 he reached the peak of his sailing career by winning the Contessa Cup at Cowes with his appropriately named yacht, *Eclectic*.

His own eclecticism was reflected not only in the variety of businesses with which he was concerned, but also in the pictures he bought in 1988 for the Contemporary Art Society (and by his own collection): in the books he read (he was, for a long time, the sci-fi reader for Faber); and lately in his interest in the dance theatre company, Adventures in Motion Pictures.

Although Philip Pollock's last years were marred by the sadly premature death of his wife, ruinous losses at Lloyd's and the cruel affliction of emphysema, his robust spirit, his gift for friendship and his supportive family saw to it that he was comforted, amused and rarely alone.

MAURICE GOLDSMITH

Maurice Goldsmith, science writer, died on March 2 aged 83. He was born on July 15, 1913.

CONVINCED that science was too interesting to be ignored and too important to be mismanaged, Maurice Goldsmith spent his life proselytising. He brought to the task the enthusiasm of the convert, for his degree from the London School of Economics had been in social sciences, which he found too lacking in rigour. He was attracted to physics in the 1930s and greatly influenced by the work of the crystallographer J. D. Bernal, whose book *The Social Function of Science* was published in 1939.

Maurice Goldsmith was born of Polish parents who had moved to London the year of his birth. His father was a master tailor and he was brought up in the Jewish faith in the East End. As a young man he held deep religious convictions, abandoned the day he stepped over the threshold of the LSE. Before the war he freelanced for various publications, including the *Jewish Chronicle* and *the East London Gazette*, but in 1939 was drafted into the War Office Selection Board, where he devised tests for selecting prospective officers.

In his spare time he worked at *Reynolds News*, then a successful Sunday newspaper with Labour convictions. After the war he became science correspondent of the weekly *Illustrated*, and with other first-generation science writers — including Ritchie Calder of the *News Chronicle*, J. G. Crowther of the *Manchester Guardian*, and Arthur Haslett of *The Times* — founded in 1947 the Association of British Science Writers.

Like others, he discovered that popularising science did

not necessarily make it popular. Science writers could alert the public, set agendas and provide materials for imaginative play, he later wrote, but could not be relied upon to transmit the essence of science. For a while he became a science teacher in a secondary school, before joining the then Department of Natural Sciences at Unesco in Paris as science editor. He wrote articles that were distributed around the world in many languages, helped to set up an association of French science writers, and launched the Unesco journal *Impact of Science on Society*. He persuaded the Indian industrialist B. Patnaik to provide funds for the Kalinga Prize for Science Writing, still awarded today.

In the mid-1950s, he presented the first-ever science programme on commercial television, a weekly half-hour for ATV called *Meet the Professor*. In a tiny studio in the West End he conducted interviews with leading scientists as they boiled under the lights. But his long-term interest was not so much the content of science, but how it could best be organised for *human welfare. Until the early* 1960s little attempt had been made to plan science strategically. "The hard fact is that we are colossally ignorant," he wrote in *The Times* in 1966. "The methods of science have not been used to study the processes of science itself. We let science grow wildly, so that it progresses inefficiently and its rate of advance is distorted."

In 1964 Goldsmith had published with Alan Mackay a book called *The Science of Science*, establishing the same year the Science of Science Foundation — later the Science Policy Foundation — of which he became director. His genius for networking provided the foundation with a distinguished committee of management and it made many contributions towards a better understanding of how to manage science. Introducing a lecture by Goldsmith at the Royal Society of Arts in 1967, C. P. Snow said: "Goldsmith is one of those characters, far too rare in any society, who act as a creative influence. Most people don't know the innumerable things he has started all over the field of science, as a labour of love quite unrecognised by society."

Goldsmith wrote or edited many books, including biographies of Joseph Needham and J. D. Bernal, and in 1986 published *The Science Critic*, a call for a new kind of person who could act in science as critics do in art, film or music. He envisaged the science critic as a polymath, able to examine the progress of research and point to its likely implications, to act as a participant in ethical debates, and help the public to understand the poetry of scientific experience. In this way, Goldsmith hoped, the gap between Snow's two cultures might at last be bridged.

He leaves a wife, Anna, and one son.

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HUMPHRIES (otherwise HART), Margaret Gladys, Oakham Residential Home, 12 Oakham Close, Catford, London SE6 and 70 Ewhurst Road, Crofton Park, London SE4, died 5th June 1996; particulars to Piper, Smith & Basham (ref: H179AMS.SNO), Solicitors, 31 Warwick Square, London SW1V 2AF before 12th MAY 1997.

Miriam Angel of Heathlands, Manchester Jewish Homes for the Aged, Heathlands Drive, Prestwich, Manchester, died on 23rd April 1996 particulars to Flacks Ross Lipworth, Solicitors, 25 St John Street, Manchester M3 4DT before 9th June 1997.

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SARTAIN, GEORGE CHARLES of Austenwood Nursing Home, 29 North Park, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 8EA and formerly of "Pendennis" 1 Assheton Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire died on 15th November 1996 particulars to B P COLLINS & CO Solicitors of COLLINS HOUSE, 32/38 STATION ROAD, GERRARDS CROSS, BUCKS SL9 8EL before 9th May 1997

STEVENS, TERENCE LEONARD of 70 Forest Road, London E8 died on 1 June 1996 particulars to DOWSE & CO Solicitors of 229/235 CAMDEN HIGH STREET, LONDON NW1 7BU before 9 May 1997

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that in proceedings before the Newcastle County Court BETWEEN ROBERT GRAHAM BALMER and JOAN BALMER, Plaint Number 94-D 1846 application has been made by the said Joan Balmer for the sale of property situate at 21 Moor Place, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne and that on the 10th day of February 1997 the Newcastle County Court directed that the property situate at 21 Moor Place aforesaid be advertised for sale and that further directions will be given by the Newcastle County Court on Joan Balmer's Application on Monday the 10th day of March 1997 at 11.50 o'clock.
It is requested that the Petitioner in the above cause namely Robert Graham Balmer formerly of 21 Moor Place, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne or anyone knowing of his whereabouts do contact Mr. Michael Smith of Mincoff Science & Gold, Kensington House, 5 Osborne Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE2 2AA, telephone number 0191 281 6151. Fax number 0191 281 8069 as a matter of urgency concerning the beforementioned Application.

ROWAN, HILDA CLARA of 22A Sheen Gate Gardens, East Sheen, London SW14 7NY died on 11th February 1997 particulars to The Executor, Midland Bank Trust Company Limited, Probate Operations, 2nd Floor, Deacon House, 192 Eyre Street, Sheffield S1 3RG before 9th May 1997

REYNOLDS, FANNY of 85 Dudley Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex died on 23 January 1997 particulars to MATTHEW ARNOLD & BALDWIN Solicitors of PO BOX 101, 20 STATION ROAD, WATFORD, HERTS WD1 1HT (Ref: CPB/JCD) before 9 May 1997 (Personal Representative(s): Sheila Milly Gardner)

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RACING

A WONDERFUL DOUBLE

A year ago Miss Dorothy Paget won the two most important events of the afternoon, the Champion Hurdle and the Cheltenham Gold Cup, with Insurance and Golden Miller, trained for her by Briscoe and ridden by Leader. History repeated itself yesterday almost in detail, the only difference being that Stott was the rider in place of Leader. All concerned, and not least the horses, are to be congratulated on a very wonderful double, for it means that the two horses are the best hurdler and the best steeplechaser in training, just as they were a year ago. Briscoe is to be congratulated not only on having kept the two horses as good as they were a year ago but on having improved them. As Insurance's race came first it must be dealt with first, although the performance of Golden Miller was the greater in that it was the more easily gained. *The pace at which the Champion* Hurdle was run was slow for nearly a mile and a half, and it was not until the bottom turn of the course had been made that the speed became worthy of the race. All five starters were still close together, with Insurance just in front. He was soon joined by Indian Salmon, with Windermere Laddie close behind. Approaching the last hurdle Insurance was just in front of Windermere Laddie and Indian Salmon. The last-named was beaten as soon as the run-in was reached, but the other two fought out a fine duel to the winning post, with Insurance always having just the better of the argument. There was a slightly larger field for the Gold Cup, a steeplechase run over three miles and three furlongs. It was won in the style of a great horse — at last he must be admitted to be that — by ten lengths from Thomond II, with Delaneige third and The Brown Talisman fourth. After Delaneige had made the running for rather more than two miles Golden Miller and Thomond II drew out, and for a short time galloped side by side. Golden Miller than drew away and, galloping with ease, resolution, and obvious enjoyment, went on by himself and in his glory to win without ever being challenged. He was not in the least distressed when he was led back to be unsaddled. Miss Paget led him in, quite properly proud of her horse, who had been received with much cheering out on the course and from the Stands as he went, by himself, past the winning post. The cheering and clapping of hands were renewed when he came back to the paddock.

ON THIS DAY

March 8, 1933

Golden Miller, the greatest jumper between the wars, won the Grand National the following year, as well as the third of five consecutive Gold Cups, a record unlikely ever to be surpassed.

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

1,700 women in HIV doctor alert

■ More than 1,700 women were offered HIV tests yesterday after a junior doctor who helped to deliver their babies and carry out hysterectomies was found to be infected with the HIV virus.

The doctor, whose identity and sex has not been revealed, worked at four hospitals in Gloucestershire and Essex between February 1991 and January this year..........Pages 1, 2

Blair pledges food standards agency

■ Tony Blair exploited Cabinet tensions over food safety as he announced last night that if a Labour government were elected it would set up an independent food standards agency. Sniping continued between government departments over the report on hygiene in the meat industry..........Pages 1, 2

Europe to blame

Judge Daniel Rodwell QC condemned Europe's laws against corporal punishment as he jailed two young arsonists..........Page 1

Paedophile jailed

Keith Laverack, a senior social services manager, has been jailed for 18 years for sexual assaults on children in care..........Page 3

Ancient ways

Residents of homes built on an ancient common must pay the Lord of the Manor whatever he asks to cross his land to reach their front doors..........Page 5

Unlawful conduct

The Lord Chancellor acted unlawfully when he denied people right of access to the courts..........Page 6

Hollywood beasts

Excavations in Los Angeles for a new rail line have unearthed remains of beasts that roamed Hollywood at the end of the Ice Age..........Page 7

Rural alliance

Three countryside pressure groups are to merge in an attempt to fight Labour plans to outlaw hunting..........Page 8

Care failure

A schizophrenic who killed his stepfather and stabbed his mother was failed by the professionals who should have helped him, according to a report..........Page 11

Albania anarchy

Southern Albania appears more in the grip of anarchy than in a state of political rebellion..........Page 14

Indigenous fake

An elderly woman has embarrassed the Australian art world by passing off her work as that of a fictitious Aborigine..........Page 15

Life for 'Black Widow'

Austria's "Black Widow" serial killer has been jailed for life after a jury found her guilty of murder in a specimen case..........Page 17

Teacher finds Stone Age ancestor

■ Scientists were astonished when random DNA tests established that a history teacher at a Somerset school is the direct descendent of Cheddar Man, a Stone Age ancestor whose remains were discovered in 1903..........Page 1

NATURE NOTES

OPINION

Pay as you err: Little faith can be placed in either the pensions industry or the regulator..........Page 21

Country consensus: Hunting needs reform, but it also needs friends..........Page 21

Shining example: Has American criticism become blind to the strivings and achievements that inspire people?..........Page 21

OBITUARIES

Michael Manley, Prime Minister of Jamaica; **Maurice Goldsmith**, science writer..........Page 23

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: If William Cobbett could look out on the modern countryside, he would cry with anguish and rage at the yeomen of England drenching their fields in chemicals and throwing up bungalows with no care for anything but cash ... Page 20

Sir Peter Hall: Both political parties are craven when it comes to what I care about: our culture..........Page 20

LETTERS

Ministerial responsibility in abattoir affair; Albania; child prostitution..........Page 21

BUSINESS

Sears: Littlewoods has decided not to go ahead with plans to buy the Freemans mail order business from Sears but revealed that it is talking to other bidders..........Page 25

Subbuteo: The table-top football game invented at Tunbridge Wells in 1947 is no longer to be made in Britain, a move that will cost 250 jobs..........Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 Index rose 21.0 points to close at 4420.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 98.4 to 98.1 after a fall from $1.6114 to $1.6052..........Page 28

SPORT

Motor racing: Damon Hill was 13th after opening practice for the Australian Grand Prix, more than 2½sec behind Michael Schumacher's Ferrari..........Page 48

Football: Chesterfield and Plymouth Argyle have been charged by the FA after a brawl at a match..........Page 48

Athletics: Wilson Kipketer, of Denmark, set a men's 800m indoor world record of 1min 43.96sec in Paris..........Page 44

CAR 97

The sandwich at the heart of small car design

[illegible]

Mon Dieu! "The French have flung down the gauntlet, and indeed the rest of their clothing." Richard Morrison on *les films bleus*..........Page 19

Great Gluck: The Welsh National Opera delivers a shattering performance of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*..........Page 19

Women must weep: Ariel Dorfman collaborated with Tony Kushner to write *Widows*, returning to the harrowing themes of his *Death and the Maiden*..........Page 19

MAGAZINE

King Kohl: What drives the Chancellor..........Page 12

Soul sister: There's more to Gillian Shephard than sensible shoes..........Page 26

Weekend

Low tide: Voting and time for a change..........Pages 1,2

Property: Designing a manor..........Page 8

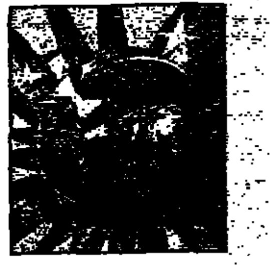
Home life: Telling parents you are a lesbian..........Page 11

10 15

Top flight: Alisha's Attic run the country..........Page 6

The biz: The life of a music press officer..........Page 4

directory



Funny money: The hard-nosed business of Comic Relief..........Page 4

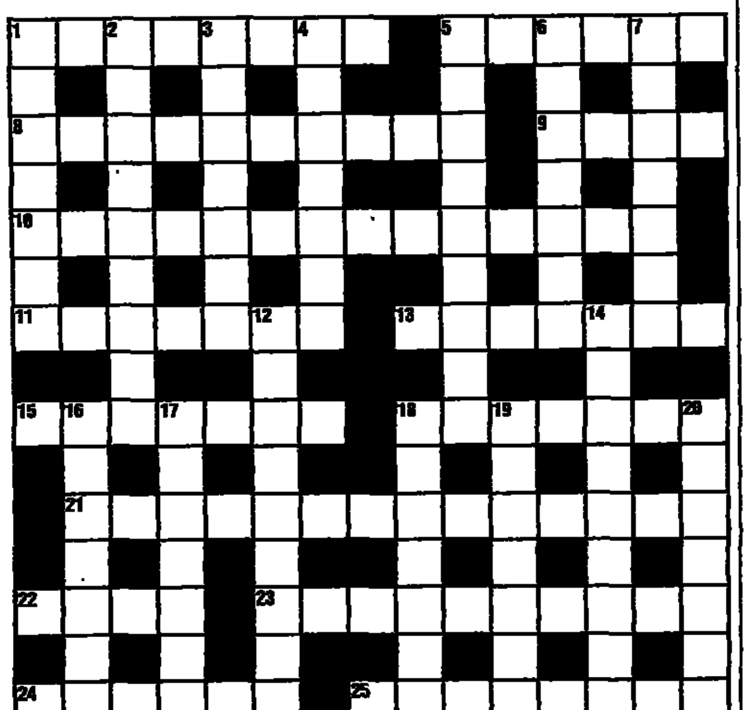
Food:..........Pages 7, 8

Books:..........Pages 9-14

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,422

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address ....



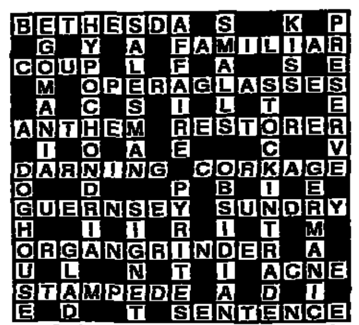
ACROSS

1 English trait — fairness (8).
5 Extremely protective of Italian girl (6).
8 Falsifying it in a log — it can result in legal action (10).
9 Pass the fish (4).
10 Singer holding note — after sherry, say, that could put one to sleep (14).
11 State units of width and weight (7).
13 Fellow everyone gets to make a fool of (4,3).
15 Smoke with lady-love in bed (7).
18 Male has row on motorway — what's up with the mini? (7).
21 Dray horses like running free in North country area (9,5).
22 Song used misleading words (4).
23 Bull housed in castle (10).
24 Manoeuvre carefully during race to get cups, etc. (3,3).
25 Dark brown animal caught in trap? On the contrary (8).

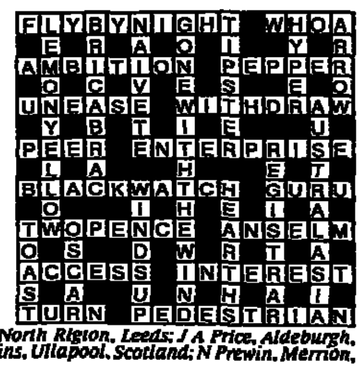
DOWN

1 Obscure film extracts in middle of reel (7).
2 Jack may be in a predicament (2,3,4).
3 Hat on, and cape (7).
4 Measure concentration of acid turning up in game (7).
5 Rescheduled at ten — live broadcast (9).
6 Kid needs to produce two pounds for cuddly toy (3-4).
7 Taken in by constable, Australian players arrested on stage (7).
12 Support for Indian lines seen out of the corner of one's eye (5-4).
14 Diver left inside craft on government test (9).
16 Crazy old-fashioned measure supported by Telegraph (7).
17 Red rose represented in church hanging (7).
18 Athlete — thrower securing first in discus (7).
19 Daughter at home in Paris or American capital (7).
20 Leader of church gripped by sectarian spirit (7).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,416



Solution to Puzzle No 20,421



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: *D G Phillips, North Rigton, Leeds; J A Price, Aldeburgh, Suffolk; D Scott, Banstead, Surrey; G Parkins, Ullapool, Scotland; N Prewin, Merrion, Dublin.*

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises: 6.31 am	Sun sets: 5.53 pm
Moon sets 5.25 pm	Moon rises 6.05 am

New moon tomorrow

London 5.53 pm to 6.28 am
Bristol 6.03 pm to 6.36 am
Edinburgh 6.02 pm to 6.44 am
Manchester 6.00 pm to 6.38 am
Penzance 6.16 pm to 6.49 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises: 6.28 am	Sun sets: 5.55 pm
Moon sets 6.47 pm	Moon rises 6.36 am

New moon today

London 5.55 pm to 6.26 am
Bristol 6.05 pm to 6.36 am
Edinburgh 6.04 pm to 6.41 am
Manchester 6.02 pm to 6.36 am
Penzance 6.17 pm to 6.47 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	00.51	7.1	13.22	7.4
Aberdeen	00.30	4.3	12.39	4.5
Avonmouth	05.30	13.7	18.57	13.8
Belfast	10.18	3.5	22.50	3.5
Cardiff	06.16	12.7	18.43	12.7
Devonport	04.57	5.5	17.28	5.4
Dover	10.15	6.7	22.41	6.9
Dublin (N Wall)	10.49	4.4	23.23	4.3
Falmouth	04.28	5.3	16.59	5.2
Greenock	11.59	3.5	-	-
Harwich	11.15	4.1	23.35	4.1
Holyhead	09.34	5.8	22.03	5.8
Hull (Albert D)	05.37	8.6	17.45	9.0
Ilfracombe	05.15	9.5	17.41	9.6
King's Lynn	05.46	6.7	17.53	7.2
Leith	01.42	5.8	13.57	5.7
Liverpool	10.32	9.8	22.59	9.8
Lowestoft	08.53	2.4	20.51	2.6
Margate	11.30	4.7	23.39	4.8
Milford Haven	05.38	7.1	17.54	7.2
Newquay	04.21	7.1	16.46	7.2
Oban	05.12	4.1	17.37	4.0
Penzance	03.50	5.7	16.15	5.6
Portland	06.11	2.0	18.53	2.0
Portsmouth	10.33	4.7	23.03	4.9
Shoreham	10.27	6.4	22.58	6.6
Southampton	10.01	4.6	22.30	4.7
Swansea	05.34	9.9	18.00	10.0
Tees	02.57	5.4	15.09	5.6
Walton-on-N	11.07	4.3	23.24	4.2

All times GMT. Hights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Boulmer, Northumberland, 14C (57F); lowest day max: Dundrennan, Dumfries and Galloway, 7C (45F); highest rainfall: Castlederg, Co Tyrone, 0.79in; highest sunshine: Clacton, Essex, 5.9hr

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** southern England and Wales mostly cloudy with a little drizzle in places, the North dry and bright with sunny spells. Temperatures in many places well above normal, but light northeast winds may make North Sea coasts feel chilly. Scotland and Northern Ireland mostly dry, with sunny spells after early mist and fog patches. Winds mostly light. Freshening southerly winds will bring more cloud into the West later. Temperatures will be mild.

☐ **London, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, N Wales, Central N England:** a cloudy start but bright spells developing. Wind northeast becoming southeast, light or moderate. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales:** mostly cloudy, patchy drizzle on coasts. Wind northeast becoming southeast, light or moderate. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, N Ireland:** sunny spells after early frost and mist. Wind variable, becoming southeast or south, light. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **NE England, Borders:** dry with sunny spells. Wind northeast to east, mainly light. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, Argyll:** dry with sunny spells after early mist and frost. Wind west becoming south, mainly light. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** sunny spells, becoming cloudier. Wind southwest to south, moderate becoming strong. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Outlook:** drizzle in the north and west, otherwise dry with sunny spells.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

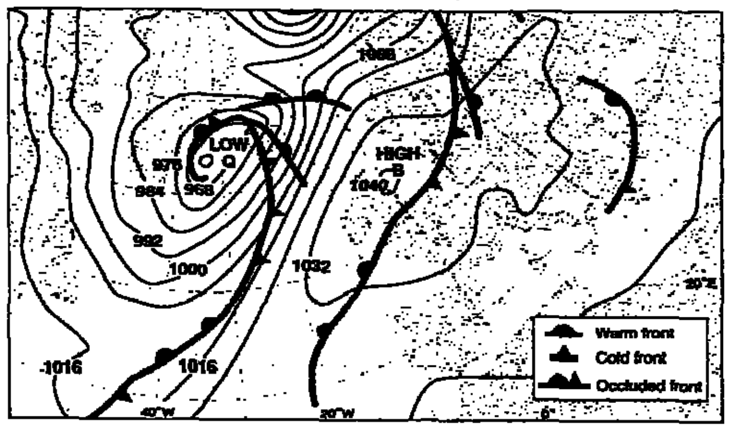
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	X					Leuchars	X				
Anglesey	0.4	0.01	10	50	d	Littlehmptn	-	-	10	50	c
Aspatria	0.1	0.01	11	52	r	London	0.1	-	12	54	c
Aviemore	2.2	0.57	11	52	r	Lowestoft	2.4	0.01	11	52	c
Belfast	-	0.04	14	57	r	Manchester	-	0.01	11	52	c
Birmingham	-	0.01	11	52	c	Margate	X	0.01	12	54	b
Bognor R	0.1	-	10	50	c	Minehead	1.0	0.01	12	54	c
Bournem'th	-	-	10	50	c	Morecambe	-	0.01	11	52	c
Bristol	-	0.01	11	52	c	Newcastle	1.7	-	13	55	b
Buxton	0.6	0.01	9	48	c	Newquay	0.2	-	12	54	c
Cardiff	0.1	0.01	11	52	c	Norwich	1.2	-	12	54	c
Clacton	5.9	-	10	50	s	Oxford	-	-	11	52	c
Cleethorpes	X					Penzance	X	0.01	12	54	du
Colwyn Bay	0.2	0.01	12	54	c	Poole	-	0.01	12	54	c
Cromer	1.1	0.01	11	52	c	Prestatyn	X	-	13	55	c
Dunbar	X					Ross-o-wye	0.1	0.01	11	52	c
Eastbourne	3.5	0.01	11	52	b	Ryde	X				
Edinburgh	X					Salcombe	-	0.02	11	52	c
Eskdalemuir	-	0.40	8	46	r	Sandown	-	0.01	10	50	d
Exmouth	-	0.01	10	50	c	Saunton Snd	0.2	-	11	52	du
Falmouth	-	0.01	10	50	du	Scarboro'	2.6	-	13	55	b
Fishguard	0.1	0.01	10	50	d	Shanklin	-	0.01	10	50	c
Folkestone	2.8	-	10	50	fg	Shrewsbury	0.2	-	11	52	c
Glasgow	-	0.18	12	54	r	Skegness	-	-	11	52	c
Guernsey	0.2	-	12	54	c	Southend	X				
Hastings	0.9	-	10	50	b	Southport	-	-	12	54	du
Hayling I.	-	0.01	9	48	fg	Southsea	-	-	11	52	c
Herne Bay	1.6	0.01	13	55	b	Stornoway	0.2	0.12	9	48	r
Hove	0.6	X	9	48	b	Swanage	-	0.01	10	50	c
Hunstanton	X	0.01	11	52	c	Teignmouth	-	0.01	11	52	c
Ilfracombe	X					Tenby	-	-	10	50	du
Isle of Man	-	0.01	9	48	du	Tiree	-	0.34	9	48	r
Jersey	2.2	0.01	13	55	b	Torquay	-	0.01	11	52	c
Kinloss	0.5	0.17	13	55	r	Ventnor	-	0.01	9	48	d
Leeds	0.5	-	13	55	c	West-s-mare	-	-	12	54	c
Lerwick	-	0.13	9	48	r	Weymouth	-	0.01	9	48	du

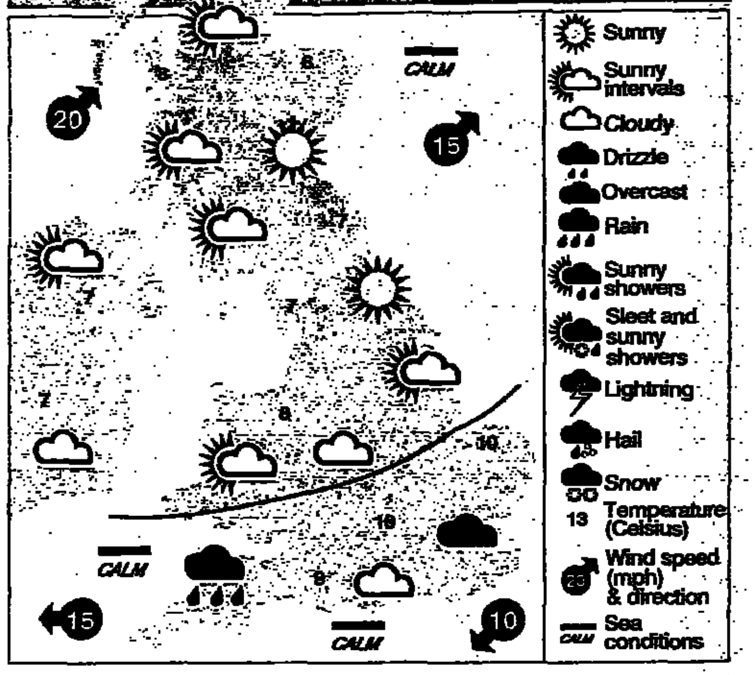
ABROAD

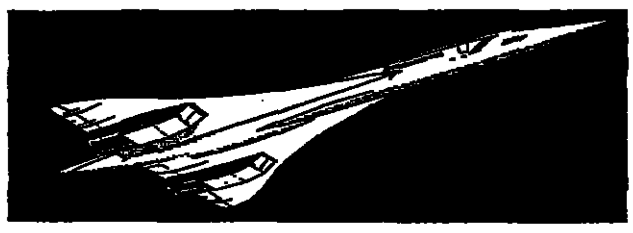
Ajaccio	15	59	X	Corfu	18	64	s	Majorca	19	66	s	Rome	X		
Akrotiri	16	61	c	C'phagn	9	48	s	Malaga	18	64	s	S Fr'isco	12	54	f
Alex'dria	19	66	c	Dublin	9	48	f	Malta	18	64	f	S Paulo	27	81	c
Algiers	18	64	s	Dubrovnik	16	61	s	Melb'rne	22	72	f	Salzburg	8	46	r
Amst'dm	10	50	f	Faro	22	72	s	Mexico C	17	63	f	Santiago	30	86	s
Athens	17	63	f	Frankfurt	11	52	f	Miami	29	84	s	Seoul	8	46	fg
B Aires	26	79	f	Funchal	18	64	s	Milan	15	59	f	Sing'por	32	90	f
Bahrain	21	70	s	Geneva	10	50	f	Montreal	-3	27	fg	St'kholm	3	37	r
Bangkok	35	95	f	Gibraltar	17	63	s	Moscow	2	36	c	Strasb'rg	12	54	f
Barbados	28	82	s	Helsinki	3	37	r	Munich	7	45	r	Sydney	23	73	r
Barcelona	16	61	s	Hong K	25	77	s	N Delhi	26	79	s	Tangier	19	66	s
Beirut	14	57	f	Innsbrck	9	48	f	N York	7	45	s	Tel Aviv	17	63	c
Belgrade	13	55	s	Istanbul	10	50	f	Nairobi	29	84	f	Tenerife	28	82	s
Berlin	11	52	c	Jeddah	27	81	s	Naples	X			Tokyo	15	59	s
Bermuda	23	73	f	Jo'burg	19	66	r	Nice	16	61	s	Toronto	0	32	f
Biarritz	15	59	f	Karachi	X			Oslo	10	50	s	Tunis	20	68	f
Borde'x	15	59	c	L Angels	X			Paris	12	54	c	Valencia	20	68	s
Brussels	9	48	c	L Palmas	26	79	s	Peking	14	57	s	Vanc'ver	7	45	r
Budapst	12	54	s	Le Tquet	12	54	f	Perth	X			Venice	13	55	d
Cairo	20	68	f	Lisbon	21	70	s	Prague	8	46	c	Vienna	11	52	c
Cape Tn	24	75	s	Locarno	18	64	s	Reykjavik	-1	30	sn	Warsaw	10	50	f
Ch'church	X			Luxembg	8	46	c	Rhodes	16	61	s	Wash'ton	10	50	f
Chicago	-2	28	s	Luxor	23	73	s	Rio de J	34	93	f	Wel'ngton	15	59	X
Cologne	9	48	c	Madrid	20	68	s	Riyadh	26	79	s	Zurich	8	46	c

Temperatures at midday local time on Thursday. X = not available



Changes to the chart above from noon: high B will drift slowly east with little change in central pressure; low Q will run quickly northeast while filling





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Naughty with spice: the car that breaks the rules

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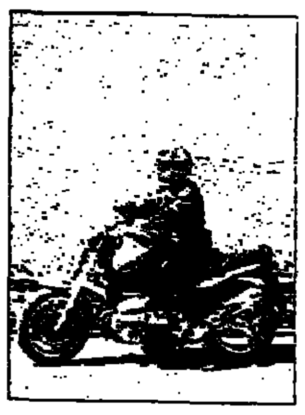
CAR 97

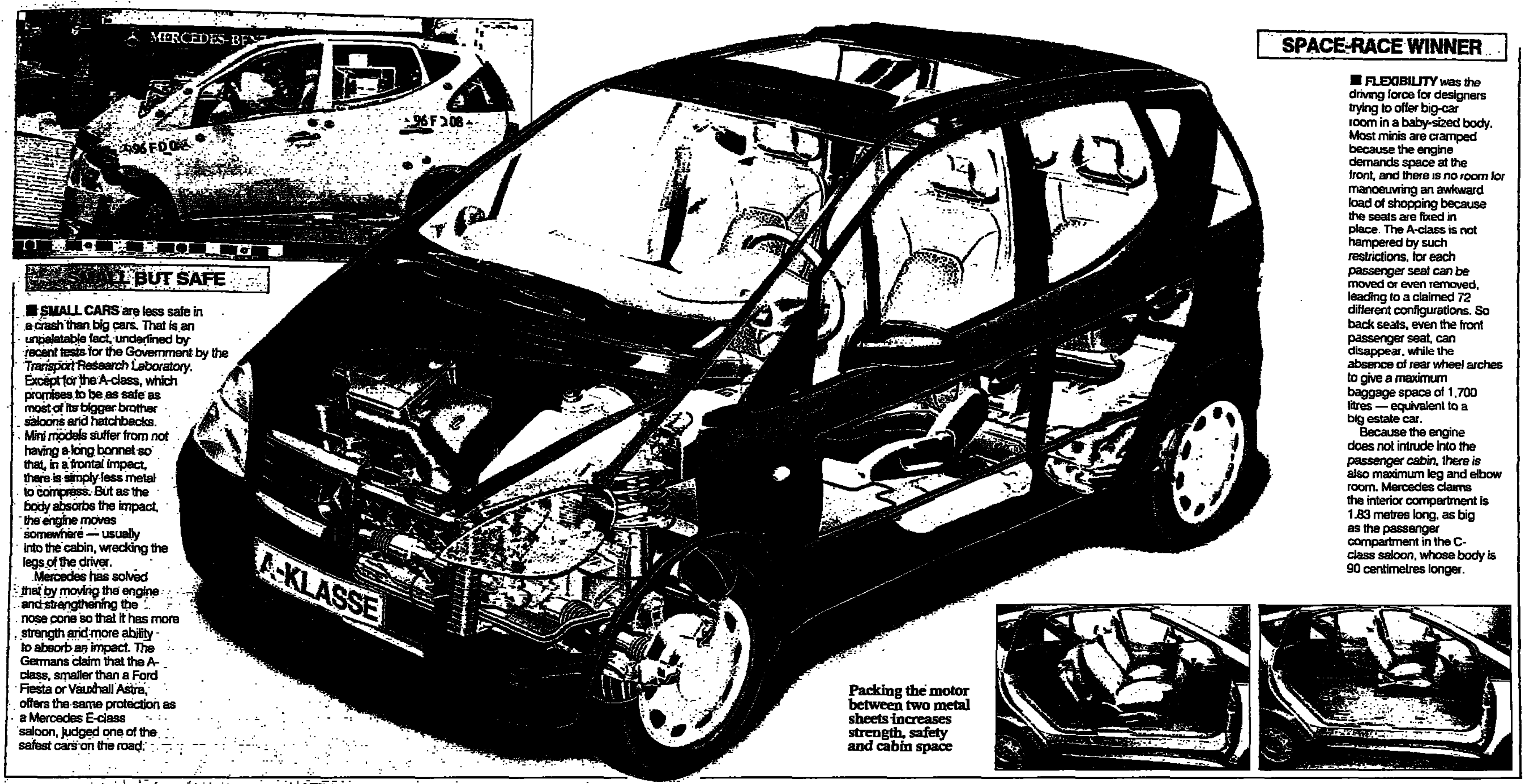
Girl goes South for a winter on two wheels

Page 8



SATURDAY MARCH 8 1997

An engine sandwich lies at the heart of the new revolution in small car design, reports **Kevin Eason**



SMALL BUT SAFE

SMALL CARS are less safe in a crash than big cars. That is an unpalatable fact, underlined by recent tests for the Government by the *Transport Research Laboratory*. Except for the A-class, which promises to be as safe as most of its bigger brother saloons and hatchbacks. *Mini models* suffer from not having a long bonnet so that, in a frontal impact, there is simply less metal to compress. But as the *body absorbs the impact, the engine moves* somewhere — usually into the cabin, wrecking the legs of the driver.

Mercedes has solved that by moving the engine and strengthening the nose cone so that it has more strength and more ability *to absorb an impact*. The Germans claim that the A-class, smaller than a Ford Fiesta or Vauxhall Astra, offers the same protection as a Mercedes E-class saloon, judged one of the safest cars on the road.

SPACE-RACE WINNER

FLEXIBILITY *was the* driving force for designers trying to offer big-car room in a baby-sized body. Most minis are cramped because the engine demands space at the front, *and there is no room* for manoeuvring an awkward load of shopping because the seats are fixed in place. The A-class is not hampered by such *restrictions*, for each *passenger seat can be* moved or even removed, leading to a claimed 72 different configurations. So back seats, even the front passenger seat, can disappear, while the *absence of rear wheel arches* to give *a* maximum baggage space of 1,700 litres — equivalent to a big estate car.

Because the engine does not intrude into the *passenger cabin, there is* also maximum leg and elbow room. Mercedes claims the interior compartment is 1.83 metres long, as big as the passenger compartment in the C-*class saloon*, whose *body* is 90 centimetres longer.

Packing the motor between two metal sheets increases strength, safety and cabin space

Mercedes ends a mini era

The first place you look is under the bonnet. Apart from exceptions like the Porsche-designed Volkswagen Beetle, the engine has been in the same place almost since the car first took to British roads a century ago.

Flip open the bonnet of the Mercedes A-class, *though*, and the only *thing* staring back at you is the future — a future in which the engine is more likely to be underneath than in front.

For Mercedes has revolutionised the small car in almost the same way as Sir Alec Issigonis did when he designed the Mini. The Mini defined the packaging of a small car for almost four decades with its transversely mounted engine driv*ing the front wheels*, leaving clear interior space for four passengers in a box just 10ft long.

As Sir Alec doodled his famous design, he did not have to worry about crash regulations which could make an engine in the front of a small car more of a liability than a bonus. Designers of modern small cars do though, and that is forcing a radical change in their thinking.

There is no place in the new world of *motoring* for mini-sized minis. Little cars are going to be longer, fatter, heavier, more luxurious — and more expensive. The days of cheap and cheerful — when you opened the door of a Mini with a piece of wire — have gone forever to be replaced by high-tech, high-style cars which might not be as long as a Rolls-Royce but look like a double-decker bus next to Sir Alec's original.

Where the Mini crossed every boundary of class and income in the Sixties to become a motoring icon for everyone, Rover says its new Mini, due in the year 2000, will be designed to be chic in New York, Tokyo and London but "not necessarily appealing to people in West Hartlepool".

In other words, mini-cars are going upmarket — and the carmakers cannot help it. Customers will not tolerate a harsh and noisy ride, no matter how cute and quirky the car, which means that incredibly *sophisticated ride and handling* packages have been incorporated in the latest cars.

But severe crash regulations have also necessitated huge investment to ensure that new minis are safe. The technology is expensive to *develop but has prompted, in the* case of the A-class, the biggest advance for years.

In a front-on crash, the driver and passenger are only protected by the strength and "deformability" of the nose; in other words, the bonnet and front structure need to absorb and dissipate the impact long before it reaches the passenger cabin. That is the hardest trick to perform on a small car, simply because the nose is short and stubby, no more than a container for the engine.

On impact, the engine is almost first in the firing line, no matter how big the bumpers and strong the beams designed to absorb the shock, and which run lengthways through the car. The chances are high that the engine will be smacked, like a tennis ball on a racquet, firing it towards the legs of the driver and passenger. In bigger cars, there is enough space in which to manage the impact; in a small car, you are virtually sitting with your feet right up against the engine.

Which set Mercedes' designers on their path to a unique idea, packaging the engine out of harm's way, yet still allowing the cabin to be free of intrusive gearbox or engine bulges.

The designers made a sandwich, the top layer a floor that stretches from the throttle, clutch and brake pedals to the rear bumper, the *bottom layer a steel protective* cover. In between is the fuel tank, battery, front and rear axles, fuse box and exhaust system. The four-cylinder engine has been "sliced" and flattened and lays with the gearbox at the entrance of the sandwich, against the passenger cabin front wall. That leaves the nose free to contain the plastic bits-and-pieces, such as the washer bottle, and stronger impact absorbing beams.

In a crash, the engine is pushed down and into the sandwich floor instead of into the passenger cabin. It is a brilliant yet simple solution *that gives the new A-class the level* of crash protection only found in big executive cars, according to Mercedes, which unveiled the car for the first time this week at the Geneva Motor Show.

Even Rover's attempt to spoil the launch by showing off concept ideas for a Mini for the next century did nothing to stymie the reception of the A-class. Rover's bug-eyed concept cars only confirmed that Mercedes is set on a path that no other carmaker in the world is yet ready to follow.

Rover's designers came up with a *similar solution to those at Mercedes, sticking a three-cylinder* engine under the back seat but driving the rear wheels, unheard of among small cars these days. Geoff Upex, Rover's design and concepts director, says the rear wheel-drive idea was simply for "crash management and manoeuvrability". Having the engine in the front got in the way of stronger and more absorbent crash beams, which have to weave around the block and its attendant components, while the front wheels could not turn as fully, obstructed by the *mountain of metal* between them. With rear wheel-drive, the front *wheels could have the concept Mini* turning on a pound coin.

Upex told me on Rover's Geneva stand that it was an elegant solution for a small car. "We are having to deal with crash regulations which were unimagined in *the days of Sir Alec. Having the* engine up front just makes the job that much more difficult, but in the rear, it is out of the way and leaves the space clear for us to design the toughest structure."

So the new Mini for the year *2000 will be rear-engined, offering* better-than-ever crash protection and cabin space. Er, not exactly, because Rover is locked into a deal to take conventional 1.4-litre engines from Chrysler, which will only fit under the bonnet. The Mini *concepts were actually 18 months* old and a long way from the final version due to be signed off by BMW, Rover's owner, later this year. Bernd Pischetsrieder, BMW's chairman and Issigonis's nephew, decided the Mini had to be *recognisably a successor to the* original: so, 40 years on, the Mini for the millennium will still be a front-engined, front wheel-drive.

Which leaves the technological field clear for Mercedes, unless Rover has some sparkling ideas *none of us can yet imagine.*

However, to describe the A-class as a mini is slightly optimistic. It is short (just 3.57 metres compared to the Ford Ka's 3.63) but tall (more than 220mm higher than a Ka) and wide (88mm fatter than Ka). That height also helps make A-class safer because occupants sit about 20 centimetres higher than in a conventional hatchback; in a side on collision, the impact should come below hip height and at the strongest part of the car in *the door* sills.

For all its modern styling, the A-class *seems* a bulky car, *the overall* impression more of a squashed VW Golf in which you sit rather stiffly upright, like a schoolchild told to pay attention. There is lots of legroom though, oddly, headroom seems restricted in spite of the vehicle's *height*. *And the engines* are hardly mini-sized: 1.4 and 1.6-litre petrol engines and two 1.7-litre diesels, with a power range from 60 to 102 horsepower. So this Mini will be equally at home cruising as negotiating crowded city streets.

The mix obviously appeals because Mercedes has already logged interest from 3,500 potential buyers in the UK. One chauffeur-hire company has ordered 25, which will be plush, luxurious, leather-trimmed and air-condition*ed versions for use around London* and the South East. Sales, which start next Spring, could be as high as 22,000 a year here, with customers ranging from young city singles to families who want to buy a safe second car.

They will pay for the privilege of owning an A-class — between £13,000 and £15,000 — but they will also be buying the first generation of mini car to depart from engineering ideas laid down four decades ago. The age of Sir Alec might be *ending, but the age of the Mercedes* mini is dawning.

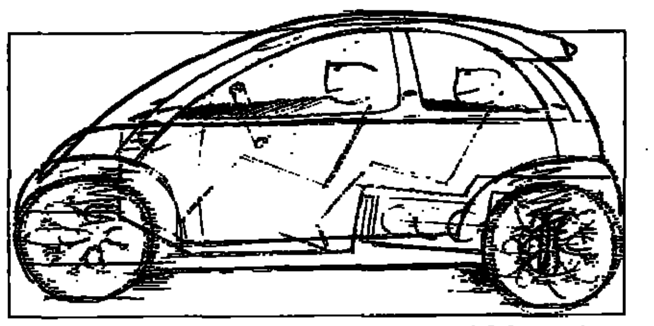
ROVER'S GREAT IDEA - SHAME IT WON'T HAPPEN

WHEN Sir Alec Issigonis was given the go-ahead to build a revolutionary new *Mini* 40 years ago this week, legend has it he drew his first sketch on the back of a cigarette packet.

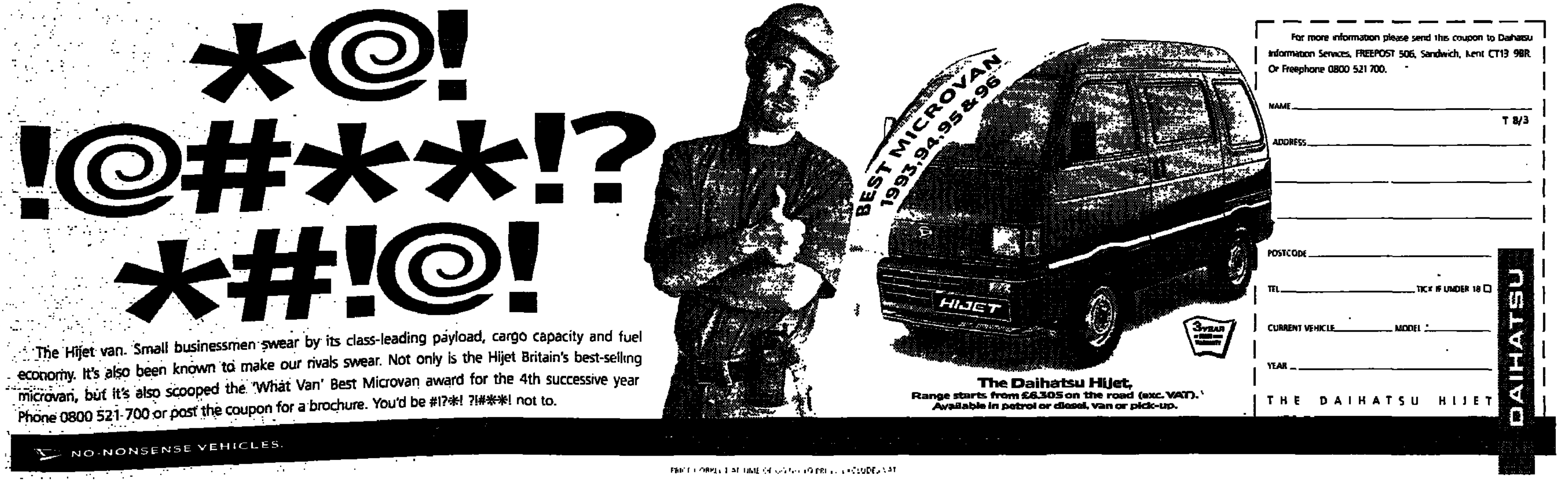
Now the men charged with the job of designing a new Mini for 2000 seem hamstrung by Sir Alec's simple but brilliant idea: he decided to package a four-seater car into a box and bonnet just 10ft *long. To do that* though, he had to find somewhere to put the engine.

So he turned it sideways and stuck it on top of a gearbox able to transmit power to the front wheels. That left the cabin space *untouched — an idea which* spread to the extent that just about every type of small and medium-sized car on the market today uses a similar layout.

This sketch, not seen before, of the Mini concept cars at Geneva this week shows Rover's design*ers wanting to put the engine* under the rear seats driving the rear wheels. The design is compact and clever, with the four-door version about the same length as an A-class but with the interior space of a *BMW 7-series ex*ecutive saloon. Pity, then, that Rover is forced to retain the original front-engine, front-wheel-drive *layout, pioneered* by Sir Alec, because the company has no engine short or angled enough to fit under the rear *seats*.



Newly revealed sketch shows Rover's wishful thinking



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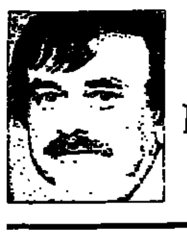
"You are what you drive" is a marketing-led fallacy that scares us into buying self-deprecating window stickers and shunning perfectly good cars

Snobs have Skoda marqued for life

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

One of the best-selling car stickers of the last decade or so has been the one that starts "My other car's a . . ." to be completed by Rolls-Royce, BMW or Mercedes. The sticker is most often to be found in the back windows of Skodas, but also appeared in older Minis and the more prosaic Fords.

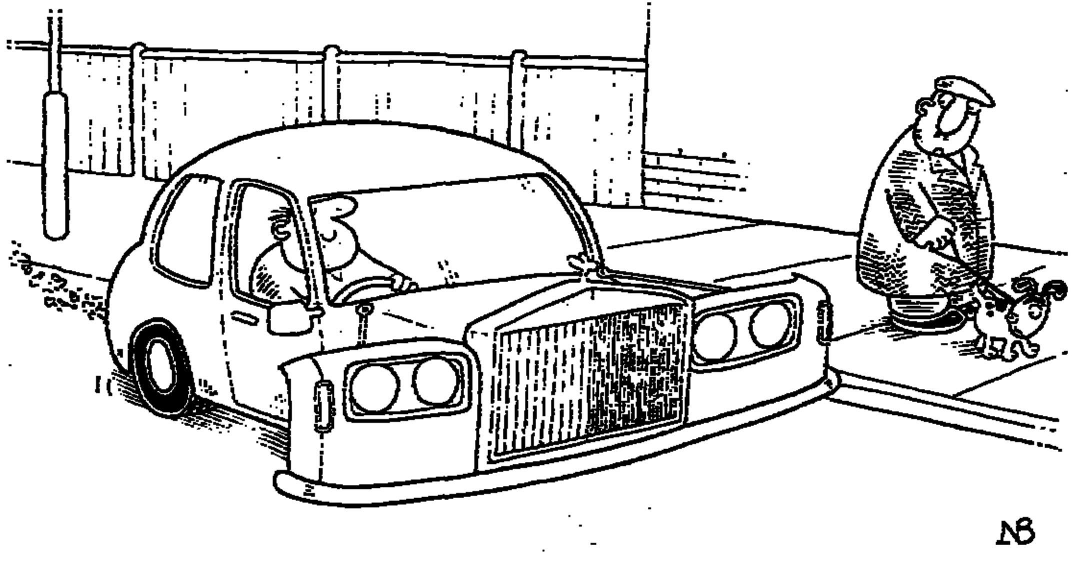
The owners who display these stickers are having a little defensive joke at their own expense, a very British trait. They are saying: "You must think I'm a real bore because of the car I drive, but at least I am aware of my deficiency."

At the heart of these apologetic displays is car snobbery, overt and inverted. We are what we drive, in the eyes of many, and car companies shamelessly exploit our weakness for imagery. If we cannot have the BMW or the Mercedes, then we shall demonstrate our awareness of the shortcoming with a jokey sticker.

Recently, two items in television programmes have demonstrated that car snobbery runs deep, to the point where one hardly knows whether to laugh or cry. One example was provided by a blind testing of the new Skoda Felicia mid-range saloon up against several rivals, including the Vauxhall Vectra and the Audi A4.

The cars' badging was covered with sticky tape and ordinary drivers were invited to look them over (though not drive them). Nearly everyone liked the Skoda, several people said it was the best car of the lot and others put it second only to the Audi. But once the badging was revealed, some of those who had previously said they would buy the Skoda changed their minds. A Skoda? No way.

On another television programme, *Top Gear*, four "repmobiles" were tested and given marks out of ten in various categories: handling, performance, comfort, etc. The car that *came out on top* was the Ford Mondeo. This was no surprise to me because I own one and I know how good it is.



There are plenty of people however who would no more be seen dead in a Ford than they would in a Skoda (the latter incidentally, is one of the most successful rally cars of all time). The biggest *mountain* in the range of obstacles carmakers have to cross is not build quality, or speed, comfort or even price: it is image.

At various times I have owned a couple of (second-hand) 7-series BMWs, in the days when the 7-series had an elegantly beautiful body. Undoubtedly it was a terrific car with terrific engineering. Now they have the wedged rear end that makes them look like any other car but I don't doubt the quality is as good as ever.

For every BMW driver who has made a detached judgment, I would bet there are four who have bought a badge. Therein lies the proof that marketing the image works, and BMW are the past masters. But there is an important rider: selling on image will never work unless the image has first been built on quality.

The image builders also have to to be aware of which names work for them and which against. When BMW bought Rover it was not the Rover name they wanted but the names Rover owned, such as Land Rover and Mini. There are a lot of marques patented to Rover, like Riley and Morris, which will most likely never be seen again.

So look out for the next-generation Mini: the name Rover will not appear in the marketing, or on the car. The brand image of the word Mini is so strong that it is the only word needed to sell it.

If proper nouns are important, so are adjectives and adverbs. If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck then surely it is a duck. No: the new BMW touring looks like an estate car and does the job that an estate car is supposed to do. But according to BMW it is not an estate car, because that description has undesirable associations.

Pretentious? Not arf, gov'nor. But you can be sure that large numbers of people who would no more drive an estate car than wear brown in town will buy this estate car. Skoda, even under VW's ownership, has a long way to go.

Drivers fume at car park clamp on kind deeds

Jenny Knight

on councils' confusing rules

Penny-pinching councils have dreamed up a scheme to stop good deeds in their car parks. The plan will stop kind-hearted motorists from passing unexpired parking stickers to other drivers.

New machines introduced in towns as far apart as Bristol and Basildon, Thurrock and Wigan require motorists to key in their registration numbers. As well as discouraging generous deeds the machines have caused confusion.

The Transport Research Laboratory quizzed motorists in Wigan using the "registration number" pay-and-display machines and discovered one third had problems obtaining their ticket while two thirds of those questioned were unhappy with the system.

Electrician David Price, 62, is typical of drivers who have been baffled by the machines' complexity and found they have innocently incurred a parking penalty. He dashed off after putting 60p into a machine in Grays, Essex, and found he had to pay a £10 fine.

He says: "I didn't realise the system had changed. At first I couldn't get a ticket. Then I saw a key pad and I pressed four for the number of hours I wanted. The ticket came out and I stuck it inside my windscreen.

"I was amazed to find I had a fixed penalty notice when I got back, until another motorist explained the new system. He said loads of people didn't understand it. I telephoned the council to complain but they said I had to pay the fine. It rose to £30 after seven days and then £100, so I paid up but I'm furious. How many people read the small print of pay-and-display machines? When I examined it carefully I found a small piece of paper stuck inside the machine explaining what to do."

According to councils that have installed the machines, *passing on unused time for a parking place is not a good* deed but a serious offence, reducing the authorities' parking revenue. However, the Transport Research Laboratory found that councils' revenue from the new machines hardly changed.

The Automobile Association says the system is over complicated and is asking the Department of Transport to stop the spread of machines "which confuse drivers and do not provide any benefits for parking control".

Most councils who operate the machines refuse to allow appeals against parking tickets on the basis of mistaken entries or simple confusion. Yet a spokesman for Thurrock Council claims that the system was introduced to help the public: "Dozens of local authorities now use the 'registration number' machines. We were told that although they wouldn't increase our revenue much, they would reduce the costs of queries over parking penalties.

"Previously when people got parking tickets they would turn up with a sticker showing the right time and date and say it had fallen on the floor. Now if they turn up with a sticker which shows the right time, right date and carries their registration numbers there is no argument. They have a valid ticket and we accept their claim."

But he added that excuses from Mr Price and others like him would not be accepted.

Which leaves an unhappy Mr Price, saying: "I paid the right money and didn't fraudulently use someone else's ticket. It's just another way of ripping people off. It's petty, unjust and pointless. It's the sort of irritating measure which drives people to use out-of-town shops where parking is free. This new type of machine will penalise people who are in a hurry, or are preoccupied such as mothers looking after a couple of children."

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ WOMEN SHUN motorcycles as a means of transport, according to AA Insurance. Britain's biggest motoring organisation says of 300 requests for motorbike insurance quotes, just 25 came from women and five of those shared a bike with a husband *or son. A quarter of women* bikers own a motorcycle costing between £500 and £600 but most ride 100cc to 125cc machines or mopeds.

■ ROLLS-ROYCE this week introduced its new chairman, Graham Morris, former sales chief at Rover, who joins the luxury carmaker after a three-year spell at Audi. Graham will be glad of the rest after commuting weekly from his British home to Audi's German headquarters at Ingolstadt. He flew there and back more than 220 times, leaving home on a Sunday night and returning on Friday. He was only in his new office at Rolls-Royce in Crewe for an hour and 23 minutes, however, before jetting off to Geneva.

■ MIDDLE-AGED executives at the Geneva Motor Show had to sit down and drink a glass of water after hearing news that Sophia Loren, the sex symbol and movie star lusted after by generations of men, is a car fan. Not just cars, specifically good old *British* Range Rovers. Tom Purves, Rover's sales chief, says the gorgeous, pouting and now somewhat ageing Sophia dined with the company's sales boss in Italy and declared her loyalty to the big off-roader from Solihull. Sigh . . .

■ ROGER KING, former Tory MP for Longbridge in Birmingham, now garrulous public relations man at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, should arrange a getting-to-know-you lunch with his long-time chief executive, Ernie Thompson. At the SMMT's Geneva Motor Show cocktail party, King announced his boss as "the man who needs no introduction: Ernie Thomas".

Fire and theft: the Mersyside squad checks burnt-out cars to stop their identities being used to mask stolen vehicles

Insurers to pay police

A new cash fund is set to combat car criminals, reveals **Tony Dawe**

Britain's police forces are to receive an unexpected boost in their fight against car crime — from insurance companies. The Association of British Insurers will announce plans later this month to set up a central fund that will be available to help the police with specific initiatives.

The fund, expected to start at a modest £100,000, will provide material help in the shape of vehicles, computers and cash to pay for police overtime. It will contrast with controversial sponsorship schemes that have seen the name of Harrods and Thresher, the drinks retailer, emblazoned on police cars.

The launch of the fund follows trial projects including the highly successful Operation Phoenix run by Merseyside Police's stolen vehicle squad. The operation was made possible by a £10,000 contribution from the ABI to pay for overtime which allowed officers to check an additional number of suspicious cars and lorries and recover £105,000 worth of stolen ones.

Insurance companies had already paid out on the thefts and have now been able to recover their money.

"The operation was a useful case study and it was pleasing that goods were recovered as a direct result of our contribution," Tony Baker, the association's deputy director, said. "When police forces approached us in the past for help, we sent their requests to individual insurance companies, but that led either to nothing being done or to duplication because more than one company wanted to help.

"It will be more logical to establish a central fund with a list of criteria which projects must meet. The fund could be used, for example, to provide an extra motorbike for a squad, a laptop computer to help co-ordinate a special inquiry or a repeat of Operation Phoenix."

Detective Inspector Mike Barron, head of the 15-man Merseyside squad, was delighted at the success of the operation. "It proved that police stolen-car squads are commercially efficient," he said. "We are dealing with a high value commodity and the more effort we put in, the more goods we can recover.

"The squad costs £400,000 a year to run but last year we *recovered more than £1 million worth of stolen vehicles.* Department overtime is cut continually, however, and requests for internal support increase every year. This sort of funding is the only possible way we can enhance our resources."

He used the ABI money to pay for overtime so that officers could track down more "ringers", stolen cars which have been given the identity of vehicles written off by the insurance companies after accidents. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency forwards details of all applications to re-register written off vehicles to the police but officers do not have the time to check them all. Merseyside, for example, received 1,086 reports from the DVLA last year.

Some of the write-offs will legally have been skilfully repaired, but others will have been sold to thieves who have scrapped them after swapping the registration plates, vehicle identification and chassis numbers to stolen cars.

Official police guidelines require forces to check only one in ten of the DVLA reports but Inspector Barron was able to check one in four with the extra money provided by the ABI. The result was the recovery of an extra 18 vehicles and eight arrests.

"We were able to look at more of the names known to the police and suspicious addresses which appeared on the DVLA forms as well as more *of the cars which appeared to have been totally wrecked,"* the inspector added.

His squad's biggest find was an M-registration Volvo lorry tractor unit worth £38,000. They also recovered a stolen Volvo 940 worth £12,000, a Ford Escort and Renault 19, both worth £4,400 and several less expensive cars.

The Merseyside squad has achieved a reputation for its initiatives and is the only one to operate a burn-out scheme. Whenever a car is found burnt-out — and there were 1,800 on Merseyside last year — the squad sends an examiner to identify the vehicle, which he can do even if all the obvious identification marks have been removed. The police will then be on the look-out for anyone attempting to re-register a car with the details from the burnt-out one.

Inspector Barron is now hoping to capitalise on the success of Operation Phoenix by persuading the insurance industry to support a new operation aimed at catching villains red-handed as they *attempt* to sell stolen cars.

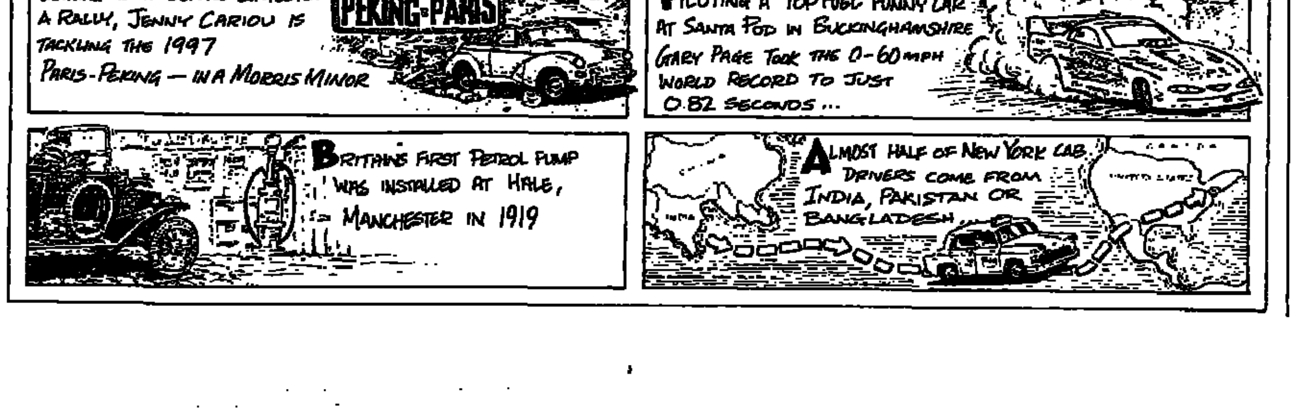
"We would follow-up suspicious advertisements in the car-trade and local evening papers which asked prospective buyers to call at certain times only, suggesting that the sellers were operating from a callbox or mobile phone," he said.

"We would also check out cars being offered at unusally low prices. It would only take minutes to identify stolen vehicles and the likelihood of getting immediate results would be high. Yet I can only launch such an operation with the help of outside funds.

"I have given the insurance companies a challenge. We have already delivered on Operation Phoenix and proved that this sort of sponsorship can work. Now I am waiting for them to respond with further investment."

However, Baker warned: "There is a degree of suspiciousness in the industry about funding an operation because people believe the police are there to do just that. But if companies are recovering money they might not otherwise have received they must surely see the benefit."

AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans



HAVING NEVER BEFORE CONTESTED A RALLY, JENNY CARIOU IS TACKLING THE 1997 PARIS-PEKING — IN A MORRIS MINOR
2
PEKING-PARIS
PILOTING A TOP FUEL FUNNY CAR AT SANTA POD IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GARY PAGE TOOK THE 0-60MPH WORLD RECORD TO JUST 0.82 SECONDS...
BRITAIN'S FIRST PETROL PUMP WAS INSTALLED AT HALE, MANCHESTER IN 1919
ALMOST HALF OF NEW YORK CAB DRIVERS COME FROM INDIA, PAKISTAN OR BANGLADESH

AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● **LONDON**

M4 junctions 1-2 and **A4**, Chiswick area; various weekend closures. **A4** closed between the M4 junction slip roads under the elevated section. Diversions. M4 closed to through-traffic between junctions 1 and 2. (Brentford). Diversions via the A4.

A306 Hammersmith Bridge closed both ways.

A304 Fulham Broadway closed both ways between Harwood Road and Barclay Road.

A3 Kingston Bypass; northbound lane closed between Shannon Corner (A298) and Coombe Lane junction (A238).

M1 junction 2 Hendon area; major roadworks.

A406 Upper Edmonton; major roadworks.

A3212 Westminster Bridge closed overnight and at weekends.

A232 Wallington; roadworks around junction with Manor Road.

A11 Woodford Green; single-*lane traffic at junction with* Bunces Lane.

● **SOUTH-EAST**

M40 junctions 1a-2; roadworks with contraflow.

A127 East Horndon area; contraflow and 40mph limit.

M27 junctions 8-10; contraflow.

M2 junction 5-6; inside lane and hard shoulder closed both directions.

M25 junction 2 Dartford; daytime southbound lane closure with various off-peak and overnight lane closures.

M25 junction 6-10; lane closures both ways between Godstone and the A3.

A3 near Guildford; Hogs Back (A31), roadworks.

A259 Bognor Regis; temporary lights.

● **SOUTH WEST**

M5 junctions 8-9; contraflow across Avonmouth Bridge — 50mph limit.

A389, Bodmin; triple mini-roundabouts and roadworks.

A30 north of Bodmin; contraflow with 50mph limit.

A35 Christchurch bypass; lane closure between Fountain Way and Stony Lane Roundabout.

M5 junction 13; only one lane open at roundabout junction with the A419.

A31 Ringwood; contraflow.

M5 junction 26-27; lane closed in both directions.

M5 junction 23-22; lane closed.

● **MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA**

A1 Alconbury; one lane northbound.

A1139 Peterborough; 50mph limit at junction with the A605.

A6 near M1 junction 24; contraflow in both directions.

A50 Glenfield Carriageway; one lane outbound. Station Road closed at A50 junction.

A1064 Acle Way Bridge; maintenance.

A43; 10mph convoy-system operating between Geddington and the Little Oakley turning.

A5 near M6 junction 12; closed both ways.

A500 Stoke area; contraflow.

A14; contraflow between Barrow Bottom and Higham.

A46 Kenilworth Bypass; roadworks 9am to 5pm.

A41 temporary lights on Bilston Road at the Canal Bridge.

A34 Birmingham; roadworks on Stratford Road.

M5 junction 2; closing the southbound entry and northbound exit slips.

● **NORTH**

M6 junctions 37-38; contraflow both directions and 50mph limit.

A1M junction 63; 50mph speed limit.

A6 Hazel Grove; northbound lane closures.

M63 junction 10; southbound entry slip closed.

M63 junctions 11-12; 50mph limit.

M6 junctions 25-27; 50mph limit.

A585 roadworks near M55 junction.

M53 junction 2; only one lane open each way.

A19 Middlesbrough area; one lane open each way.

M1 junctions 34-35; two lanes both ways.

M1 junction 47; lane closures and speed restrictions.

A19 Moor Farm

● **SCOTLAND**

A947 Oldmeldrum to Banff Road; 10mph limit.

A96 Bridge of Don; roadworks.

M8 junction 2; lane closures.

A8 St Johns Road and Corstorphine Road; lane closures off-peak.

A701 Burdiehouse Road; contraflow off-peak.

A92 Tay Road Bridge; lane closures Southbound.

M80 junction 5; contraflow.

A923, Bothwell Street, Dunfermline; roadworks.

A710 Straiton Road; contraflow.

A9 between Dalnachardoch and Dalnaspidal, roadworks with lane restrictions in both directions.

A77 Symington; southbound lane closure.

● **WALES**

A482 Upper Aberaeron Bridge on South Road closed.

A48 Carmarthen; temporary lights and lane restrictions.

A5025 City Dulas; one-way system over temporary bridge.

A48 between Langstone and Penhow; temporary lights.

A48 Hill Street, Lydney; temporary lights.

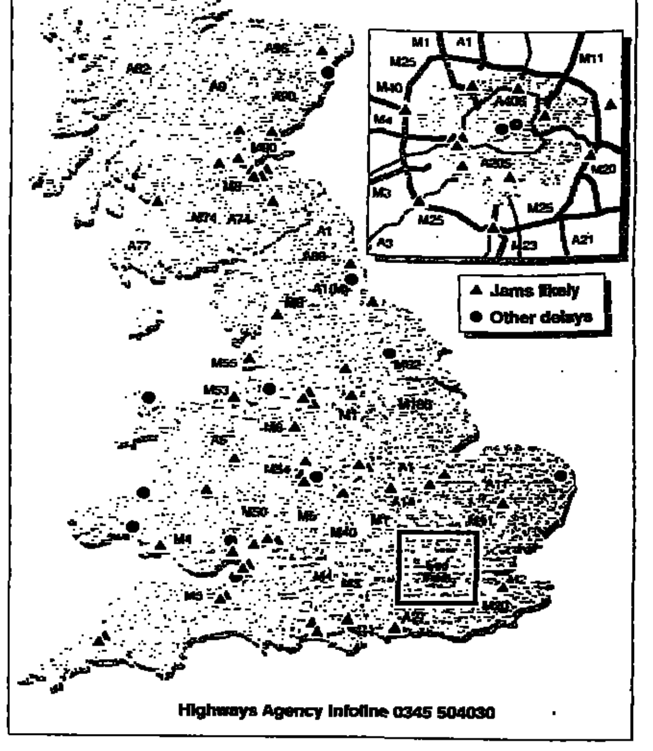
A44 between Llangurig and Eisteddfa Gurig; temporary lights.

A458 Pont Sychcoed, Cyfronydd; temporary lights.

Swansea, *A4067* Mumbles Road; roadworks.

A472 Pontypool; contraflow between Pontymoile and the Heron Roundabout.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



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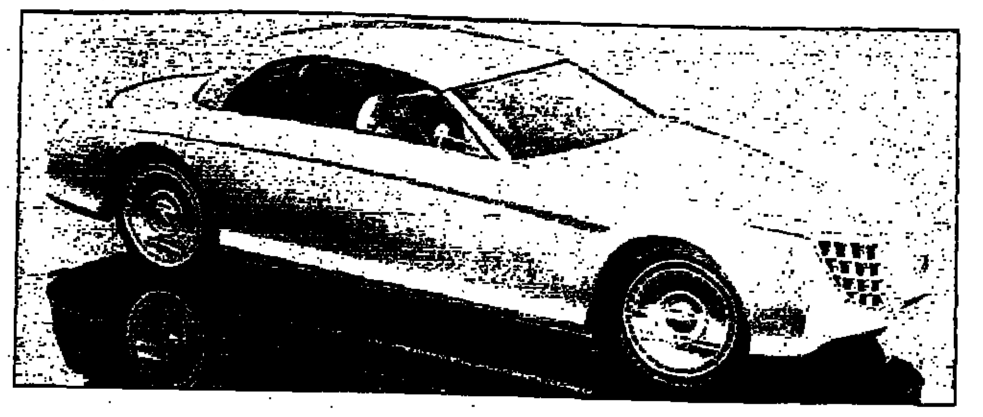
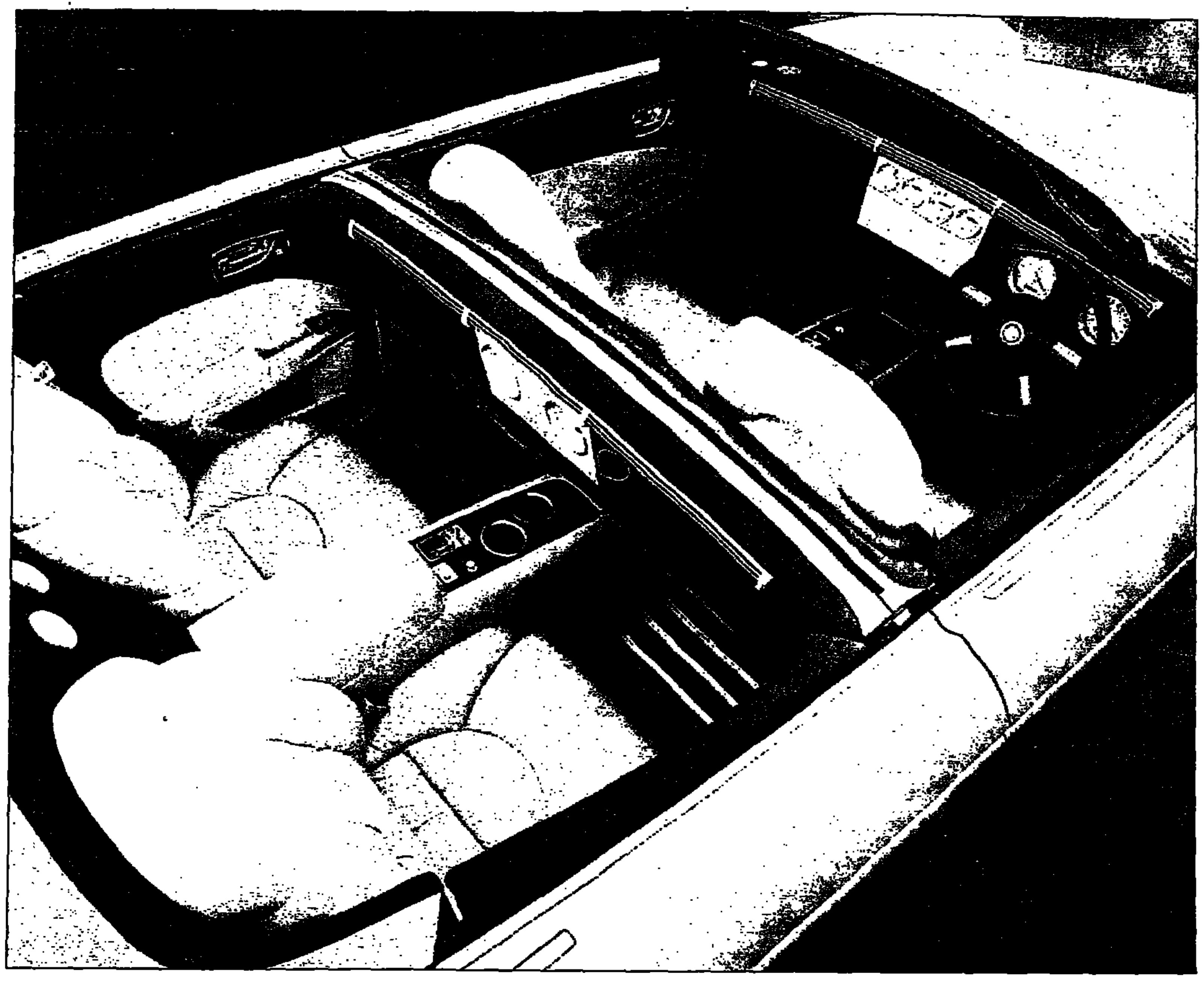
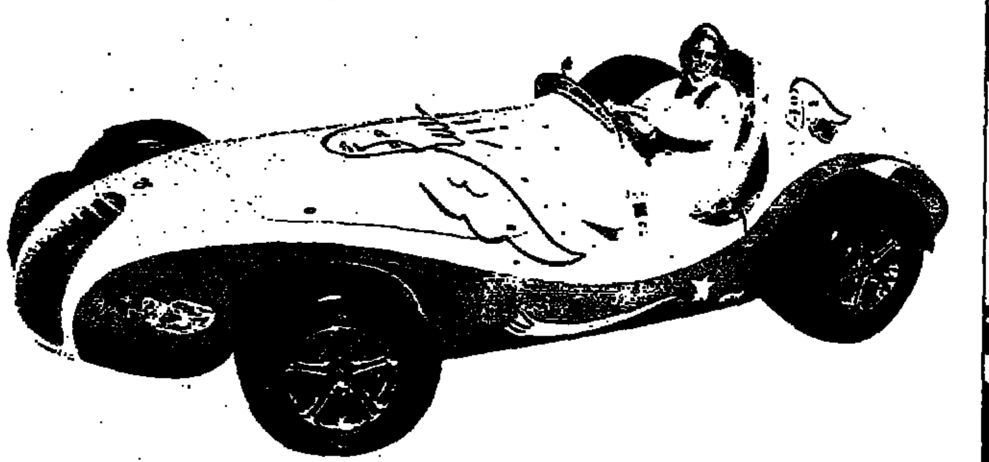
In our PC world, sybaritic outrageousness is only a 'concept'. But there was plenty at Geneva, says **Vaughan Freeman**







Chrysler's Phaeton, main picture and top, harks back to jazz-age self indulgence. But Rinspeed's single-seat Mono Ego, above, takes the prize for *exuberance*. Bertone's 4x4 sports utility design for Alfa Romeo is both dramatic and practicable

Chrysler's tempting Phaeton

Gorgeous, gold, gigantic and glittering, Chrysler's way-over-the-top Phaeton is a car that F. Scott Fitzgerald's super-rich society adventurer Jay Gatsby would have felt perfectly at home in. It's the sort of car that Cary Grant might have been chauffeured in to pre-war Hollywood premieres.

Flying straight in the face of today's motoring wisdom that *smaller is better*, *Chrysler* has opted for the bigger, biggest, best approach with its outrageous and stunning Phaeton show car.

At this week's Geneva Motor Show, European manufacturers were vying with each other to cram as much passenger space and as many seats as possible into the shortest, smallest, narrowest cars, with Mercedes setting the pace with its new A-class.

Undaunted by tediously unglamorous, politically correct — if commercially and politically relevant — considerations, Chrysler has produced a concept car which throws all notions of producing an automotive version of Dr Who's Tardis into the rubbish bin.

The Phaeton eschews recyclable plastics and ultra-lightweight and recycled materials. Instead, it is a gleaming 18ft of highly buffed chrome, mirror-like steel wheels and deeply plush leather. More than 6ft wide, the Phaeton makes *no concessions to crowded roads*, and it seats just four — though in club-class comfort, cossetted in white leather-shrouded seats as big as sofas. Instead of experimenting with battery power, fuel cells or miniscule petrol or diesel engines, the Phaeton follows the tradional Detroit Motor Town route and is powered by a vast petrol engine that would keep a small oil refinery in business non-stop. Under the bonnet is a 5.4-litre, V12 engine with a splendid 48 valves producing an enormous 425 brake horse power.

There are not one but two windscreens, one in the usual place at the front and another retractable screen ahead of the rear-seat passengers, so that when the car's roof *is stowed* invisibly away, the people in the back can enjoy their open-top motoring without the inconvenience of the slipstream upsetting their carefully coiffed hair.

Chrysler is more than happy to admit that the inspiration for the *Phaeton is drawn from half a* century ago, from its 1940 Newport, a vehicle which was used during the wartime era for conveying the rich and famous in supreme comfort — and which strangely abandoned its stately image to be the *pace car at the* 1941 *Indianapolis* 500 race.

True, Chrysler, like other manufacturers, has also developed its concept mini cars to cash in on the trend *towards ever more sophisticated* yet smaller cars. Even so, with cars like the Dodge Viper and the Prowler, Chrysler has made a habit of showing off concept cars at motor shows, only to turn them into road-going production vehicles within a matter of years. Could that mean the Phaeton will one day no longer be a dream car but a production reality?

Tom Gale, Chrysler's product development executive vice president, believes *that, just as car makers* can exploit the development of niche markets in the small-car sectors, so there will always be a place for specialist big cars too.

Gale says: "I don't think that, in general terms, cars like the Phaeton *will ever be built in large volumes.* The Phaeton concept does suggest, though, that we like to look at styling icons, to produce vehicles that are larger than life. Concepts *like the Phaeton enable us to* elevate our thinking and our image.

"The Phaeton itself is a very serious design statement as well as looking back to the past. It is a matter of finding things that are *significant* and memorable, and which customers relate to. As for big cars themselves, I think there are times when it is worthwhile considering that, just because larger vehicles are not consistent with the direction that most modern vehicles in general are taking, that *doesn't mean that there will* never again be people able to afford something that is unique. People want things that are unique."

Gale says it is unlikely that the Phaeton would ever take to the road in its present shape without considerable changes. Even so, he adds, it is likely that many of the details in the car — such as the exquisite satin chrome used on the dashboard, the huge dials, a clock and a speedom*eter set into the back of the car's* central divide so that the rear passengers know what is going on, even the car's badges — could well find themselves built into future Chryslers.

The Phaeton embodies an American motoring tradition and brings it to life once again, an era of huge cars, unfettered by the constraints of tiny garages in *semi-detached* homes, of cramped inner-city parking spaces, or the modern-day guilt that attaches to a car that is clearly expensive and expansive.

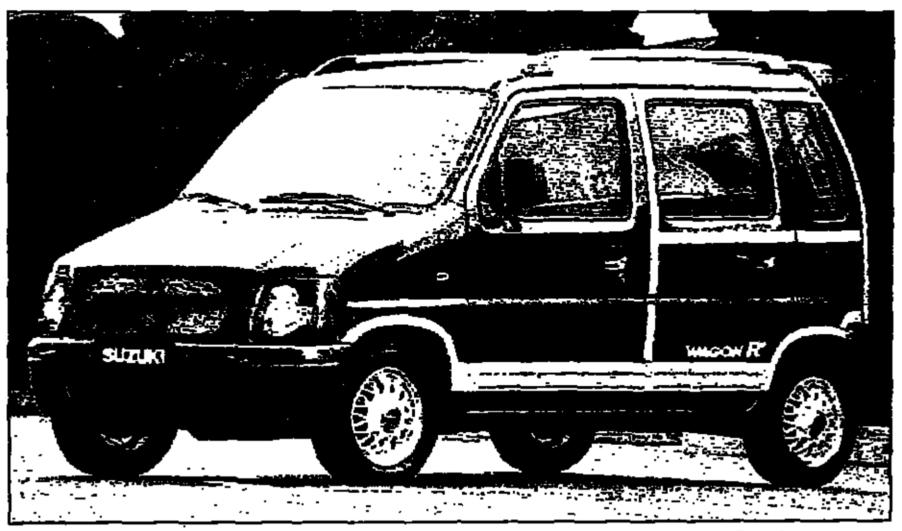
With *its two-tone* champagne-pearl colouring, huge grille, and 22-inch highly polished wheels Phaeton is no such shrinking violet and recognisably harks back to the days when the wild, the beautiful and the rich not only had money to *spend on cars, but did so — and* then flaunted it.

Given today's climate of automotive political correctness, isn't the Phaeton a little out of touch? *Design director Neil Walling* argues it is not: "With Phaeton we expanded the use of today's convertible by giving it four doors and two windshields. We took an elegant design that was originally intended for the wealthy and we created a practical, contemporary convertible."

Still, designers are allowed to run riot occasionally — especially at a motor show, and at Geneva all the best were there — from Pininfarina, which styled Peugeot's glorious 406 coupé, to Bertone, which showed off a dramatic new 4x4, badged and grilled as an Alfa Romeo. The wheelbase is mid-range so the Alfa-*Bertone* sports utility *is* not long though tall.

Will it go into production? Well, Alfa bosses were touting the idea that they would like to have distinct sports and leisure vehicle ranges, so Bertone's concept might have set *the wheels turning.*

But the award for most outrageous car went to Rinspeed with its evocation of classic single-seat race cars, the Mono Ego. As long as a Mercedes S-class and powered by a 32-valve, 4.6-litre V8, the Rinspeed will rocket to 62mph *in 4.8 seconds* and on to 160mph. Should be a bit of a struggle finding a place for the shopping though.



Buy a sensibly priced Berlingo, left, and the whole family's laughing. The wood-veneered Wagon R might leave everyone else in fits, however

Invasion of the people-movers

Get an MPV. Get a lifestyle. Get the message?

Vaughan Freeman and **Kevin Eason** see the future

You bought the surf*board and the moun*tain bike — but now you *need* the electric drill and a saw. Forget chrome and leather. Suzuki has opted for the MFI look by putting skirting boards on its bizarre new vehicle.

Just to underline the extremes of *modern* car design, the five-door Wagon R+ was *unveiled* at the Geneva Motor Show apparently to appeal to that alien species who not only have time to drive but to windsurf, ski, bicycle — anything involving Lycra.

To describe Suzuki's choice of colour schemes *for its new*, little vehicle as . . . well, imagi*native*, would be understatement, but British eyes welled *when* the wraps came off the "wood" clad version. Memories of the old Morris 1000 Traveller leapt into some minds: hours of trying to get self-assembly *wardrobes* to stand up straight into others. *Surely, only the hardiest sense* of humour would allow a *British* driver to park the woody Wagon R+ in the drive.

Still, the wood finish was tasteful by comparison with the all-white Sport version and *the Cruiser, which included* astonishingly white interiors. The 1-litre Wagon R+ — just 11ft long — is the small-scale end of a range of people-movers infesting Europe's showrooms. Everybody is making a *multi-purpose, sit-where-you-like, put-anything-in-it* vehicle — and if they aren't, they will.

According to carmakers the world over, owning a saloon or estate is not enough because you want to satisfy your lifestyle. And even if you don't have a family, you might want a versatile vehicle that has between *one and seven seats* and a big load-space, but *which drives* like a car, something off-roaders do not do.

Ten years ago, people carriers took just 10 per cent of sales, but that is forecast to double by 2005 as our *lifestyles* flourish, we don our wetsuits and *ski jackets and* head happily off into the sunset, our *families* chirruping contentedly in seats capable of being *transformed* into configurations from aircraft-style rows to four-place card tables.

Which is why Citroën is jumping into the market next spring with its oddly-named Berlingo Multispace.

Refreshingly — and unlike much of the competition though — it will be relatively cheap at less than £13,000. Citroen has decided that it will sell a basic, one-choice vehicle: just three metallic colours with co-ordinated interiors to pick from and one package of *equipment*. That *policy* of simplicity will allow Citroën to *maintain* bargain-basement prices at a time when a lot of people-carriers are demanding some executive car-style prices and should help make the Berlingo pretty popular throughout Europe.

Actually, the Multispace is a converted version of the "Van of the Year" Berlingo. You will not be surprised to discover that its humble origins as a commercial vehicle are sub*merged* in the sales blurb by a rosier picture of a "lifestyle vehicle that will appeal to the growing band of fun-seekers. Mountain bikes, scuba gear, surf-boards and all manner of outdoor leisure equipment, together with five adults, can be accommodated." Yawn.

However, the Berlingo does offer the boot space of a Citroën XM in a small package, powered by 1.4-litre petrol or 1.9 diesel engines. With huge windows all round, it also features an electric sun*roof that slides the whole* length of the vehicle so that those *in the* back as well as the front can have their hair wind-tousled.

The five-door Multispace can seat five, along with 300kg of luggage, and, says Citroën, can trundle around town just as well as *cruise on the* motorways.

Berlingo owners might be passed on the motorway though by yet another new vehicle from Mercedes-Benz. The Germans are getting ready to launch their "all-activity vehicle", the M-class, *on to the market in the* United States late this year and the UK in 1998.

M-class will also be a seven-seater but capable of going off-road too — more a Range Rover eater than a Berlingo beater — and will probably cost top Land Rover prices in Europe even though it is being made at a new plant in America. M-class wll also have every latest gadget, from anti-lock brakes to anti-skid technology, plus a simple push-button low-ratio gearbox for driving off-road.

Power comes from Merc's *new 3.2-litre V6*, an engine which has two spark plugs per cylinder which, Mercedes' engineers say, will mean lower exhaust emissions and better fuel economy, even though the vehicle is big and bulky.

Inevitably, the target audience for drivers of this vehicle will *have one* attribute sought by carmakers above all others — a lifestyle, you know those scuba-diving, biking, abseiling, sky-diving...

Unclean fun with our prize mud-slinging pair

Tony Dawe on our winners' weekend drive

Molly and Alan Griffiths had a "wonderful time" up to their axles in mud last weekend: their prize for winning the *Car 97* off-road competition.

"We completed 91.3 miles, a lot of them wading through water and charging up and down hills. It was nice to get somebody else's Land Rover dirty," *Alan joked* afterwards.

The couple were provided with a Land Rover Discovery by Marshalls of Peterborough as part of their prize entry to *Midland Auto Trader* four-wheel-drive day.

"The vehicle amazed us with what it could do. One minute we were going down into a gully with no apparent way out and then suddenly we were clear," Alan said.

"The only thing which defeated us was the steepest hill-climb, which was like trying to get up the side of the canyon. It *was well* chewed *up by the* time we reached it. We got so far and had to give up, but those who did it were in very professional rally cars with heavy duty tyres and roll bars.

"We scored 317 points and since the winner only got 375 we think we did pretty well, especially as it was the first time we had entered a test like this."

Stephen Barrett and Christopher Gedney of Boston, Lincs, took the first prize, with Julie Loades and Jaqueline McDonald of Peterborough claiming the *Car 97* award.

Molly and Alan, of Harmer Hill, Shrewsbury, only entered our competition after being sent the details by their son who is serving overseas in *the Army. They have owned* Land Rovers for the last 25 years but never entered them in rallies. Alan recently retired from the grain trade.

Last Saturday's event seemed designed to put only a little strain on the Griffiths' marriage; Alan was forced to drive one section blindfolded, guided only by instructions from his wife.

For another test, Alan had to drive into a box formed of traffic cones with a trailer *hitched to the Land Rover*, and then Janet was required to reverse out. "She did it without getting any penalty points," Alan said proudly.

Alan and Molly Griffiths

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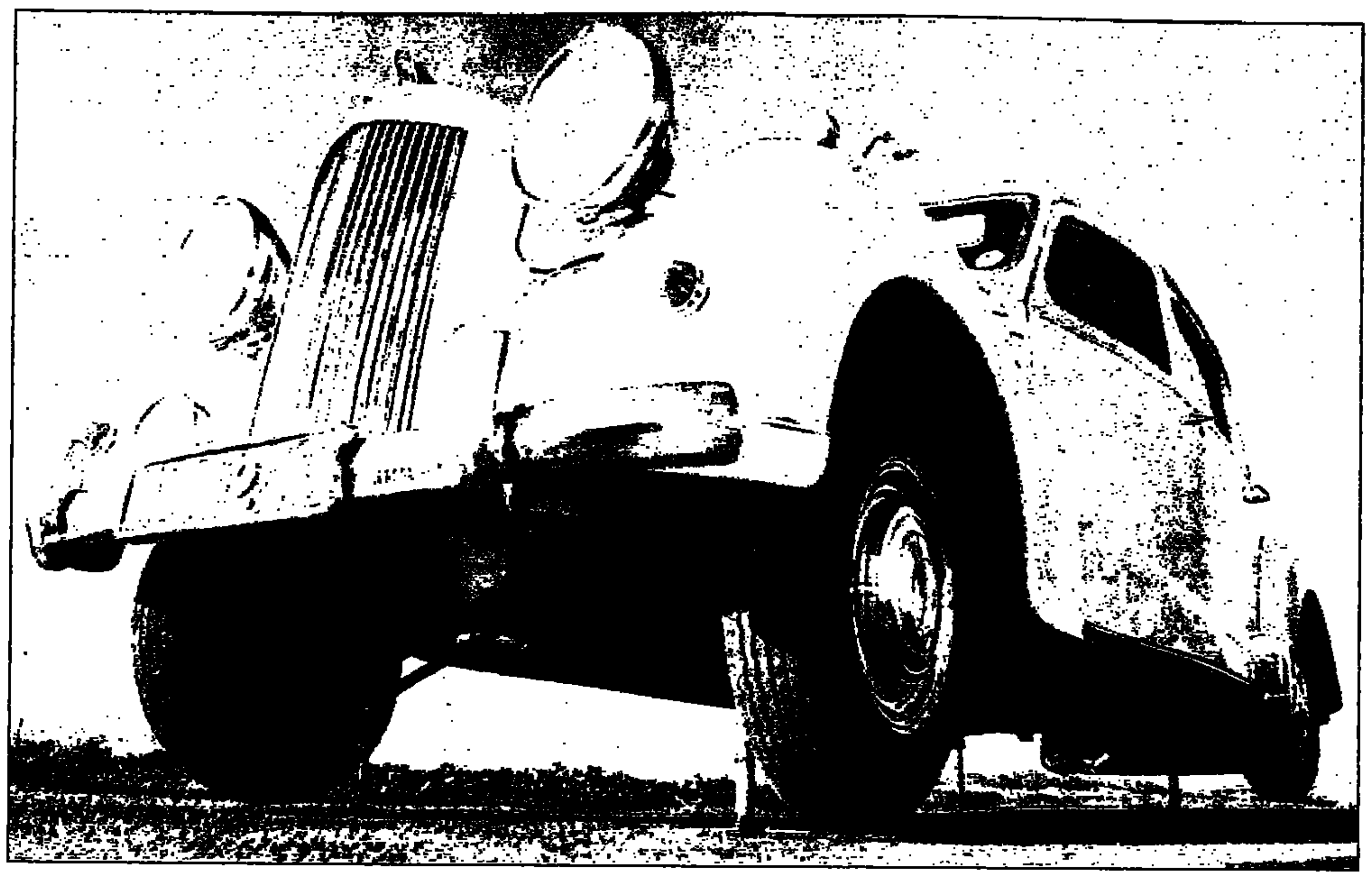
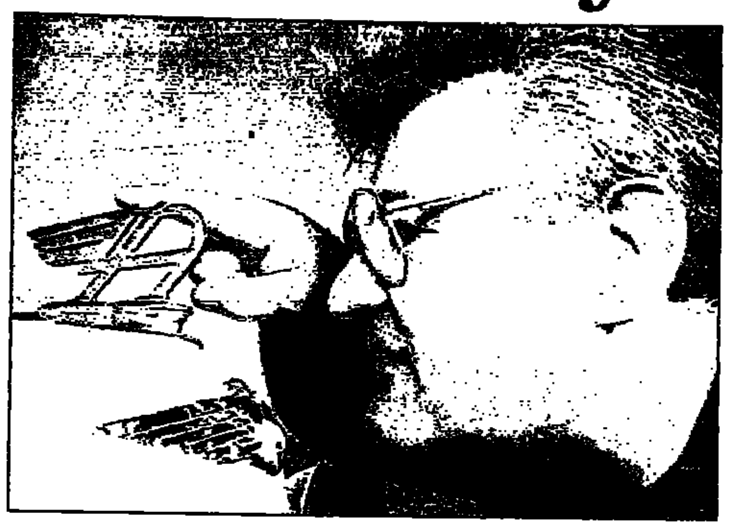
Stuart Birch drives a rare Sheerline — Austin's regally cheap rationing-era bid for the luxury market

Austin-tatious: austere Britain's bargain Bentley



We have lift-off: The Sheerline's luxury specifications featured a hydraulic self-jacking system



Proud Duncan Greig with his restored white, 1951 Sheerline

When is a Bentley not a Bentley? When it is an Austin Sheerline. From its massive Lucas P100 headlamps to its semi-razor-edged boot, the Sheerline looks the part. And alphabetically it even beats the Bentley's flying-B radiator mascot — the Austin has a flying A.

Launched 50 years ago, the A125 Sheerline was Austin's cut-price answer to the regal set: Rolls-Royce, Bentley, and Daimler. It, too, pampered the privileged in a world of leather and walnut, it had wings that curled and flowed like Hawaiian breakers, it was big, it was handsome... but it was powered by a 4-litre engine and its chassis was said to be the equivalent of railway lines.

Few who bought such cars needed to know about that, though. The Sheerline looked the part and it was, in today's sales-speak, "aggressively priced". Originally the car had a basic price of £1,000. But later in 1947, double purchase tax was imposed on cars of that price and above. So Austin lopped a pound off it and thumbed its corporate nose at the Treasury.

The Sheerline looked totally British, although it was designed by Italian-born Dick Burzi. "Really it was a crib of Bentley design," says Ian Coombes, secretary of the Austin Sheerline and Princess Club, whose 1948 model is possibly the world's oldest working example. "Leonard Lord, who was managing director of Austin in 1947, had used a Bentley during the Second World War. He wanted Austin to create something like it and they set to work. Soon after the war, he bought a new Bentley MKVI, took it to the factory, and told his people that was just what he had in mind, so they'd better make one that looked similar but at less than half the Bentley's price."

Lord eventually opted to create not one but two prestige cars on the same chassis. They were mechanically similar and apparent rivals. But while the Sheerline had a prewar look, the Austin A135 Princess, with body by Vanden Plas, had more modern styling with headlamps faired into the wings. The saloon Princess was not particularly successful, although the limousine version remained in production for more than 20 years.

The Sheerline, with its heavy headlamped gravitas, proved a splendid carriage for British ambassadors. As a Rolls-Royce and Bentley price-beater, it was just what the austerity-stricken Foreign Office ordered. Its chrome sparkled magnificently beneath the setting sun of Empire, and, provided onlookers didn't happen to have a copy of the 1947 *Guide to Posh Cars* in their pockets, the big Austin could pass itself off as thoroughly grand.

About 8,000 Sheerlines were built between 1947 and 1954. In November, 1947, it acquired Royal Status when the Queen and Prince Philip were given one by Austin as a wedding present. Around Britain, the Sheerline found favour as a mayoral carriage. It was also built as a hearse, an ambulance, a long-wheelbase limousine, a timbered estate car called the Wentworth, and even a van — the *Belfast Telegraph* had four. The weirdest Sheerline of all was a jet-propelled version, but that, like so many efforts to produce gas turbine cars, was abandoned as impractical.

Very few Sheerlines survive. "We have about 60 registered with the Club," says Coombes. "About 25 are currently roadworthy, but I'm sure there are many not known to us; thousands were exported. In 1953, Queen Juliana of The Netherlands had a convertible built on a Sheerline chassis. It was last heard of in the USA — that's the one we really want to find."

Rather nearer home is a Sheerline which the club knows all about, which is owned by Duncan Greig. When he was 16, Duncan, now 43, fell in love with a Sheerline. He bought it for £65 even though he was too young to drive: "I just had to have it," he says. "It needed restoring and I started the work, but it was too much for me then. Sadly, it went to a breaker. But I never forgot that car. My ambition was to buy another but it took me nearly 20 years."

Today, Duncan's white, 1951 Sheerline is almost fully restored and looks magnificent. "I don't know how many hours I have spent working on the car but it's a lot. I just learnt how to do it as I went along," he adds. "I do all the work on the Sheerline myself, except for the upholstery and wood trim — I'm about to spend £450 on that."

Everything works perfectly, even the built-in hydraulic self-jacking system. The commanding driving position sits behind a vast steering wheel and, of course, the seats are leather, the dashboard is walnut veneer and even the ashtray covers are veneered.

The Sheerline has a four-speed gearbox with steering-column gearchange, with first and second furthest from the driver, which feels unnatural but works well enough. I pressed the starter button of this near two-ton leviathan, released the umbrella-style handbrake and we moved off, first gear whining, the exhaust sighing. Back in the 1950s, all BBC sound effects of cars driving away were just like this.

"He'll start away in top gear if you ask him to," says Duncan. The vague, low-geared steering was not as heavy as I had feared, but any aircraft-carrier captain would feel an affinity with the turning circle and the bonnet that stretches ahead like a flight deck.

In fact, considering its size, weight and age, the Sheerline is reasonably agile except when turning at low speed. The ride was good (this was the first Austin to have independent front suspension) and, surprisingly, the road-holding inspired confidence, although everything is done relatively sedately. As speed reached 60mph, the wind started to roar; it is said that turning the giant headlamps around adds 4mph to the Sheerline's top speed.

"On a run, he'll do 16 to 17 miles to the gallon, around town, about 10 to 12 mpg on leaded," reassures Duncan.

I started to enjoy this big, stately car, sweeping along narrow lanes, oncoming traffic slowing and shuffling towards the side of the road, drivers and passengers staring uncomprehendingly and mouthing, "What's that?"

My wave of thanks may have looked just a shade imperious, but what the hell — it's that sort of car, and they don't know there's a truck engine beneath that mighty bonnet, and a pair of railway lines holding it all together.

The drive they'll use to win

Alan Copps checks out the latest Nissan Primera, our *Times*/Lease Plan company drivers' competition car

One of the advantages of entering our quest to find Britain's best company car driver is the opportunity to try out, albeit briefly, the latest Nissan Primera SRi, a model aimed specifically at the working motorist who drives a high number of miles every year.

The Primera is one of those cars that is always with us: Nissan has refined and updated the model over the years and now offers a wide range, from the basic 1.6-litre to the newly introduced sporty GT version. But the SRi is likely to be the favourite of the long-distance "user chooser" the category into which most of our *Times*/Lease Plan competitors fall.

In five-door hatchback or four-door saloon style it offers a high, but thoroughly practical, specification and its chassis was completely revised when the model was revamped last year.

The most immediately noticeable result is much greater interior space, which gives the driver a real feeling of getting "a lot of car for your money", even before the engine is fired up. The sports seats give support in all the right places and offer lumbar adjustment, an essential for the high-mileage motorist.

The leather steering wheel, prominent rev-counter dial and controls that come readily to hand in the wrap-around cockpit all combine to suggest that it might live up to that "driver's car" image with which it was launched.

External body styling is more aerodynamic than the previous model, and the most obvious signs of the SRi's performance are a large body-coloured spoiler and alloy wheels.

But these are only skin-deep signs. It is the chassis revisions which do most to justify the label. The SRi has sports-tuned suspension for extra grip in all conditions and precise handling. This provides a significant advantage at any time, but it is especially valuable in the kind of manouevring test which forms part of our competition.

That test is far from a party piece to enable our contestants to show off. It is based on the kind of everyday parking and turning situations that any driver might encounter, the only addition being that of a ball and saucer on the bonnet to monitor how smoothly these movements can be performed.

On the road, the suspension and handling of the car provide the driver with the right combination of "road feel" and comfort to exploit its performance in any conditions.

During its development, the car was subjected to thousands of miles of testing on roads throughout Belgium and France, many specifically chosen for their rough surfaces. After that sort of test, says Nissan, it should be able to put up with anything to be found in Britain.

The engine that provides all the performance is a typically quiet Nissan powerplant, a 16-valve, 2-litre fuel-injected unit which produces 128 brake horsepower. The power comes in a smooth curve and is easily handled by the five-speed manual gearbox.

Drive hard, and the car responds in an impressively sporty manner, but if you're on the motorway it will cruise in relaxed style, giving the feel that it would run happily all day, the sort of thing the company car driver seeks.

Given Nissan's reputation for build quality and reliability, the Primera SRi is likely to find plenty of support among those 30 to 40-year-old "user choosers" who are expected to be its main buyers. Nissan estimates that more than 80 per cent of all new Primeras will be bought with cash from company coffers.

There couldn't be a better opportunity to try the car than to enter *The Times*/Lease Plan Company Car Driver of the Year competition. The Primera SRi will be used for all the road driving and for the manouevring tests in each heat. All you need to enter is to raise a team of three from your company and get the endorsement of your fleet manager. Then fill in the form.

The first prize is an expenses-paid trip to the Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril on October 26, the culmination of the 1997 season. The team prize — driver training for 12 people from the winning fleet — is provided by Drive Tech, one of Britain's leading driving specialists, which organises the tests at each heat. The finals are at the Silverstone Driving Centre.

Most obvious signs of the SRi's performance are a large spoiler and alloy wheels

NISSAN PRIMERA SRI

Engine: 1,998cc, 16-valve with multi-point electronic fuel injection producing 128bhp at 5,600rpm.

Transmission: five-speed manual.

Acceleration: 0-62mph in 9.6 seconds.

Maximum speed: 127mph.

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Entry Form

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•About your company

Name of entrant: .... Position: .... Signature: ....
NB: Entrant should be director/ senior manager responsible for the company's car fleet
Company name: ....
Address: ....
Post code: .... Tel number: .... Fax number: ....
Nature of business: .... Number of employees: .... Number of company cars: ....

•Nominated drivers

	Surname	Forename	Job title	Age	Points on licence (max 3)
1					
2					
3					
4					

•Which venue?

Please select your 1st and 2nd choice location/date of regional heat (indicate 1 or 2 in box):

Elstree, Herts	Friday, 25 April	☐
Macclesfield, Cheshire	Friday, 9 May	☐
Bracknell, Berks	Friday, 16 May	☐
Nottingham	Friday, 30 May	☐
Gatwick, Surrey	Friday, 6 June	☐
Coventry	Friday, 13 June	☐

You must ensure that entrant and nominated drivers are able for both first and second choice dates and for the final at Silverstone on Friday, 4 July 1997. Initial qualification may be by telephone questionnaire. Entrants and drivers will be contacted on an individual basis.

•Competition rules

The closing date for entries is March 28 1997. Drivers must be 24 years of age or over to enter. Only corporate entries will be accepted. Drivers must be nominated by the director or senior manager responsible for the company car fleet. Drivers must be nominated in teams of three. The entrant may also nominate himself/herself as part of the team. Companies can only enter one team. Competitors must drive a company car or vehicle as part of their remuneration package. Qualification for the team/company award will be dependent upon a written test to be completed by the entrant at that team's regional heat. Employees of Lease Plan, DriveTech, Nissan, News International and the Birkdale Group are not permitted to enter. In the spirit of the competition, competitors who reached the final in two previous consecutive years, specialist organisations such as driver training companies, police, the armed forces and the like are not permitted to enter. A place in the regional heats will be confirmed in writing at least ten days prior to the heat. In the event of over-subscription, qualification to the regional heats will be judged through a random driver telephone questionnaire. If the team does not qualify the entrant will be informed in writing prior to the heat. Feedback on each driver's performance will be available after the competition. The reserve driver will be called upon at the regional heat should one of the first three drivers be unable to compete. In the event of a finalist not being able to compete in the final, the next highest scoring driver from the regional heats will be invited to compete in their place. The prize for the winner will be a special trip for two to the Portuguese Grand Prix. The team/company prize will be a driver training programme for 12 employees and the use of a Nissan vehicle for three months. Cash alternatives are not available. The judge's decision is final.

Once you have completed this form, fax it back to Lease Plan on 01753 620676 or post to Marketing Dept, Lease Plan, Thames Side, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1TY. For further information call Lease Plan on 01753 797284

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CARMART: YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S USED, ON THE FORECOURTS

Strong seller is replaced

Citroën gives AX final axe

■ CITROEN'S LITTLE AX is bidding its farewell with an on-the-road price of £6,195.

The car has been the mainstay of Citroën's small-car range for a decade, but now bows out as the Saxo chalks up record sales.

The last AX comes with sunroof, stereo, metallic paint, sports seats and new trim — plus a year's free insurance for the right buyers who get their order in before April.

Sales of the car in the UK passed the 200,000 mark, making the AX one of the nation's most popular superminis, though the Saxo now threatens to outsell it.

The exit of the AX comes as Citroën introduces price rises of an average 1.6 per cent across the range. The three-door Saxo 1.1X and 1.1SX escape the increase until the end of March, but every model in the range now comes with on-the-road pricing.

■ BAD NEWS for prospective Fiat owners, too: prices are up an average 1.7 per cent, excluding the Punto range which remains unchanged, and the recently announced Marea models. Fiat's cars now start with the Cinquecento S at £6,502 on the road and rise to £20,726 for the much-praised Ulysse people-carrier.

Civic: now with added snarl

ROAD TEST

■ NO CAR NAME implies more onerous respectability than "Civic", *Ian Morton writes.* Honda's medium saloon is the epitome of solid citizenship on wheels.

All the more surprising therefore to discover that this worthy Wiltshire-built range is moving into a sector that has not previously been associated with the marque: the wolf in sheep's clothing.

For the new five-door versions — unveiled at this week's Geneva Motor Show — are set to include an unprecedented high-performance flagship.

Under its bonnet lies a 169bhp engine that revs beyond 8000rpm, whips to 60 mph from rest in about 8 seconds and only runs out of puff as it approaches 140 mph.

Unashamedly aimed at the enthusiastic driver and the hot-shot employee whose achievements deserve a special reward, this is nothing less than the most powerful 1.8 saloon now on the market. At the front, the new five-door Civic incorporates a makeover that nods deferentially to Audi. The car's revised dimensional subtleties are supposed to make it look "more European".

Most apparent to the Honda-watcher may be the badge, which features a bolder H, displayed without encircling chrome. This is the face of future Honda cars.

Yet overall the five-door, whether in this performance version, or with existing 1.4, 1.5 or 1.6-litre petrol engines, or the newly available 2.0 turbo-diesel, remains unmistakeably a Swindon-built Civic. Prices will span from £11,000-£17,000.

If the 1.8 VTi performance figures impress, the car also sounds the part. While variable-valve technology gives this four-cylinder unit the free-revving of a V6, its song is something else. Though never loud, it accelerates with a snarl and hurries with a blare.

At UK motorway cruising speeds, realistically 85-ish these days, the engine note is dense and likely to be wearing on a long journey.

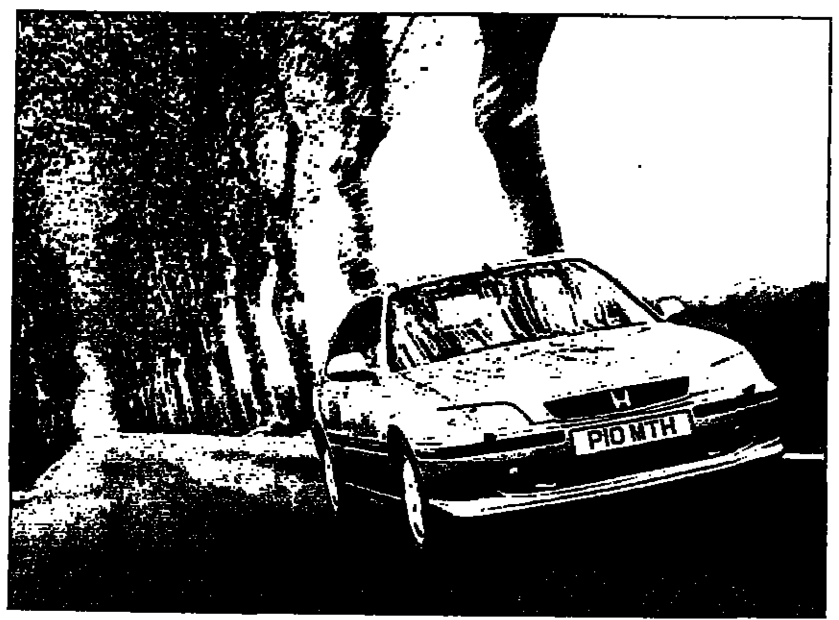
This is the only performance penalty, for a thoughtful revision of suspension geometry and the very obviously enhanced body rigidity together provide one of the most satisfying compromises now available in this class of car.

There is just the right amount of weight in the steering to make the driver confident of the placement of the front end: the car clings confidently through fast bends both tight and sweeping, and it exudes rock-solid stability while haring down the straights.

Yet the levels of comfort remain remarkably high. Ruts, ridges and roughness are soaked up by the suspension at all speeds with very little movement or noise.

In fact, were the 1.8 VTi never to escape to the open road and spin its engine beyond 4,000rpm, it could live out its entire life in quiet respectability in the accepted Civic tradition, and the undemanding owner in Budleigh Salterton might never realise what sort of car they had sitting outside the bungalow.

Lastly, for those still inclined to baulk at a Japanese name, 90 per cent of the content of Swindon Civics is now sourced in Europe, and this will be up to 93 per cent by the middle of next year.



Design aims to look more European, but the performance is the surprise

HONDA CIVIC 1.8 VTI

Engine: DOHC four-cylinder 1,797cc with variable valve timing, producing 169bhp at 7,600rpm.

Performance: 0-60 mph in 8.2 seconds, max speed 139mph.

Economy: urban cycle 25.0mpg, extra-urban 38.2 mpg, combined 32.1 mpg.

Specification: includes electric windows and door mirrors, leather and fabric seats, leather steering wheel, maplewood trim inserts, interchangeable three-level audio options, ABS brakes, torque-sensitive limited-slip diff, twin airbags and belt pre-tensioners, electric sunroof, air conditioning.

Price: in the region of £17,000.

FORECOURT

■ IF YOU CAN stand the jokes and have a highly tuned sense of humour then you can own a Skoda Estelle, which is a highly dependable car, reports *CAP Black Book.*

The Estelle is as tough as it is cheap, but it is also crude, and it lacks the sophistication brought to the Czech manufacturer by new owner, Volkswagen, *Vaughan Freeman writes.* As a result, the Estelle suffers badly from heavy depreciation.

A workmanlike design, the Estelle can be run on loose change: the Estelle 120L and the Rapid 135 Coupé are outstanding value. With the engine located Porsche-like in the rear, there are many advocates of the Estelle who praise it for fun handling.

Best buy is the 120: a 1990 H-plate car with average mileage costs around £1,000. Cars sold privately are cheapest, and cars from 1987 onwards have a five-speed gearbox. Avoid pre-87 bangers or finance-house repossessions. Watch out for blue smoke from worn cylinder heads, blocked radiators, broken interior switches — and rust.

Now it's curtains for Volvo safety

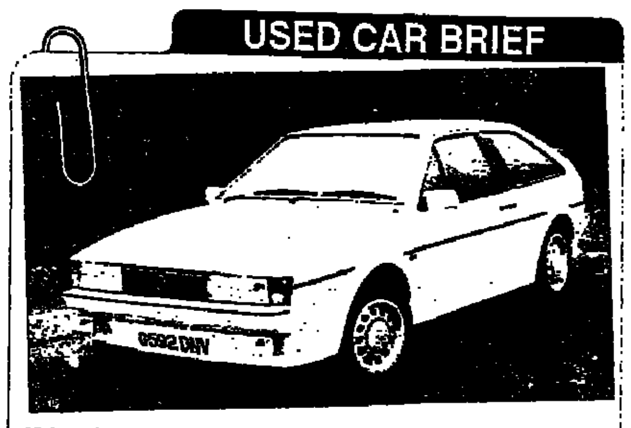
■ VOLVO IS BRINGING the curtain down on safety to reduce head injuries among drivers and passengers in car crashes. The company will soon put on sale a new airbag, hidden in the roof lining, which drops within 25 thousandths of a second after an impact.

Drivers and passengers might be protected from frontal crashes by steering column and dashboard bags, but they are often thrown against the roof and windows, and across the cabin, causing massive injuries.

Side bags stash in the roof lining

But the new "curtain" system protects heads from buffeting, with the bags dropping from the roof to form a soft barrier between the body and the tough materials in the car's structure designed to absorb the impact.

USED CAR BRIEF



VW SCIROCCO
Styled by Italian automotive artist Giugiaro, the Scirocco was launched in the early 1970s and helped breathe new life into the German manufacturer. Borrowing heavily from the MkI Golf, the Scirocco three-door sports coupe originally used 1.5, 1.6 and 1.8-litre petrol engines. The MkII arrived in 1981 and the GT was launched in 1984. Despite the success of the VW Golf GTi, the Scirocco still sold around 80,000 in the UK and 1 million worldwide. Discontinued in 1992.

GOOD NEWS
Fun to drive and sort-of-good looks in a Saturday Night Fever way. Although based on the robust Golf, prices are generally significantly lower than equivalent Golf GTis, since the Scirocco has never been recognised as a classic.

BAD NEWS
Leg and headroom in particularly short supply in the rear. Insurance can be high on newer cars. Early cars now very old and should be checked for corrosion. Power steering is also a rarity while rearward vision is restricted.

LOOK FOR
Late models which might just have some of the corrosion warranty available. Early and late cars are little different apart from the better manufacturing and anti-ageing techniques employed by VW. The 1.8 litre engines are favoured, give reliable motoring and, even in carburettor form, plenty of performance.

AVOID
Cars with clutch problems or noisy transmissions which will prove very costly to put right. Watch for oil leaks and for oil leaking on to the alternator from cylinder head gasket failure. Beware too rusting front discs and sticking front brake calipers causing brakes to bind.

SAFETY
The Scirocco is based on the VW Golf, which consistently does well in the Department of Transport safety ratings, marked above average and on a par with contemporary cars such as the Volvo 300, Vauxhall Astra and Honda Civic.

INSURANCE
Cover from *AA Insurance (0800 444777)* on a 1988 1.8GTX costs a 55-year old professional male, living in Winchester with full no claims, £181 a year fully comprehensive while a similar female pays £171. A 22-year old male, with one year no claims, living in south London pays £955, a similar female £791.

REPLACEMENT PARTS
(Prices include VAT); cylinder head £275; full exhaust £90; front shock absorber £24; rear shock absorber £20; front brakepads £32 (pair); radiator £40; head gasket £20; water pump £25; alternator £70, carburettor £170.

PRICES
Earliest (1974 to 1981) MkI cars sell for under £1,000 and pre-1985 MkII for under £1,500. Expect to pay £2,500 for a 1988 1.8GTX, £3,325 for 1990 G-reg 1.8GT, £4,000 for a 1991 H-reg 1.8GT, £5,100 for a 1992 K-reg 1.8GT, and £4,200 for a 1991 H-reg 1.8i Scala.

OVERALL The Scirocco is easy to keep on the road because of its 10,000 mile service intervals and parts from the Golf and Passat cars. Used examples have rarely been driven as hard as their Golf GTI counterparts and with so many sold in Britain there should be plenty of cared-for Sciroccos around. Fun, nice looking, and economical.

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Linda Galloway follows the sun by BMW

Despite its awesomely sized fuel tank, the BMW 850 proved a perfect mount for seeing Cape Town's many beauty spots and coping with its chaotic traffic conditions

Boxer fits the Cape

It felt like the night before Christmas. If I went to bed early, tomorrow would come quicker, and then I would get to spend ten days touring superb scenery on a flash new motorcycle.

What made it even better was the fact that I was to collect the silver R850R at the BMW Pavilion on *South Africa's Cape Town* waterfront — in February nobody really wants to be riding motorbikes on England's icy roads. In Cape Town it was a glorious 28C.

While the bike was intimidating to look at — the enormous angular petrol tank gives the impression of awesome size — it was an almost perfect fit, and the gentle sound of the boxer engine gave no hint of the power at my disposal. My only gripe was that my fingers had trouble reaching the indicator switches, leading to a few startled lurches as I involuntarily opened the throttle or shut it down while trying to indicate.

I put it down to teething trouble, and headed for Cape Point, 30 miles away, where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet in a line of spume that stretches towards the horizon.

My plan was to make a round trip to see as much of Cape Town and its environs as possible. I had made the journey before, but never *with the advantages of two wheels.* So, with the imposing front face of Table Mountain to my right, I headed east towards False Bay and straight into a traffic jam. It was the J&B Met, the year's biggest horseracing event, and the world wanted to be there. But the BMW and I sped through it and 30 minutes later I was at what felt like the edge of the continent (it's not: the southernmost tip of Africa is 180 miles away, at Cape Agulhas).

The Boxer was a gentleman, most forgiving of its novice rider. It took a while to get used to handling the machine, mainly because I felt like a fly on a rhinoceros. The machine is, in fact, quite streamlined in design; a combination of Nineties chic and retro styling with raised handlebars, chrome headlight and a user-friendly instrument panel which includes a handy petrol indicator light. The weight distribution and the cutaway seat gave me confidence.

The biggest test came when I was blasted by an unfriendly southeaster blowing at 25mph, with gusts of up to 50. Locals call it the Cape Doctor, as they say that it blows pollution and other ills out to sea, but not it is not so kindly looked upon by bikers. It tunnels through the gaps in the mountains around Cape Town, slamming into unsuspecting riders as they round corners on the contour-hugging roads *that circle the peninsula. You never* know which direction it's going to come from, and a sudden gust can have you heading for the pavement and an unplanned airborne journey 150 metres downwards.

The BMW's perspex visor, reminiscent of a police riot-shield, deflects the head-on wind effectively, but only the solid weight and roadholding of the bike keeps you upright and heading in the right direction when taken by surprise from the side.

Cape Town is a splendid place, jam-packed with breathtaking scenery, but it's wise to keep your eyes not only on the winding roads but also on other road users. South African drivers are notoriously cavalier, and what with the virtual collapse of traffic control in Cape Town, and cows grazing on the verges of dual-carriageway national roads, anything can happen. The Boxer is great for accelerating out of potential trouble: even in fifth gear the response is instant when you nudge the throttle, and the standard ABS braking system proved itself.

Overtaking a BMW 7-series saloon on the coast-hugging road that *runs downhill* from Llandudno to Camps Bay, I decided that the Boxer, sitting in the middle of BMW's fleet, was a thirty-something status symbol — not the tearaway 650 road model or trail bike, nor the sedate 1100R tourer — but the equivalent of a sporty 3-series car with the head-turning panache of just two wheels.

Safe and easy to ride, I never got within a whisper of the upper rev register, although I would have liked to have tried.

You can hire a BMW F650 motorcyle from the BMW Pavilion in Cape Town (00 27 21 419 7362) for R450 per day (£58), with unlimited mileage, or for three to five days from R350 a day (£45), which includes 125 miles (200km) a day free mileage, excluding insurance.

BMW R850R

Engine: *848cc horizontally* opposed twin producing 70bhp at 7,000rpm through five-speed gearbox.
Performance: 0-62mph, 5 secs. Max speed, 116mph.
Weight: 235kg unladen.
Seat height: 76-80cm adjustable.
Price: £7,395 plus £450 delivery charges.

STEERING COLUMN

Tuned up for the long and winding road

Beth Rissen meets songstress Judie Tzuke

Singer-songwriter Judie Tzuke is driving around Britain on a 22-date tour, her first for 11 years.

Best known for her classic hit *Stay with me till dawn*, Judie completed her new album, *Under the Angels*, at the same time as bringing up her two-year-old daughter, Talula. She also markets her own mail-order record label, Big Moon.

What was your first car?

A Mini Clubman Estate. It had wooden panelled doors and I loved it.

What car do you drive now?

A BMW, but at the moment I am driving the Vauxhall Vectra loaned by BSM for the tour.

What is your dream car?

It would have to be a BMW 528i. It is a really beautiful car — but I don't think I could ever afford it.

What was your most hated car?

I believe it was an Austin 1100, but I'm not entirely sure. It was a big square ugly thing. I didn't have it long because it blew up.

What is your worst habit in a car?

I have been told by my other half, Paul, that it is talking.

What infuriates you the most about other drivers?

Everything.

What is the most unusual car you have ever owned or driven?

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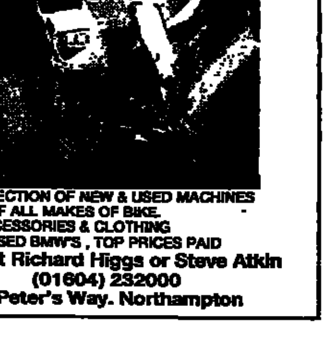

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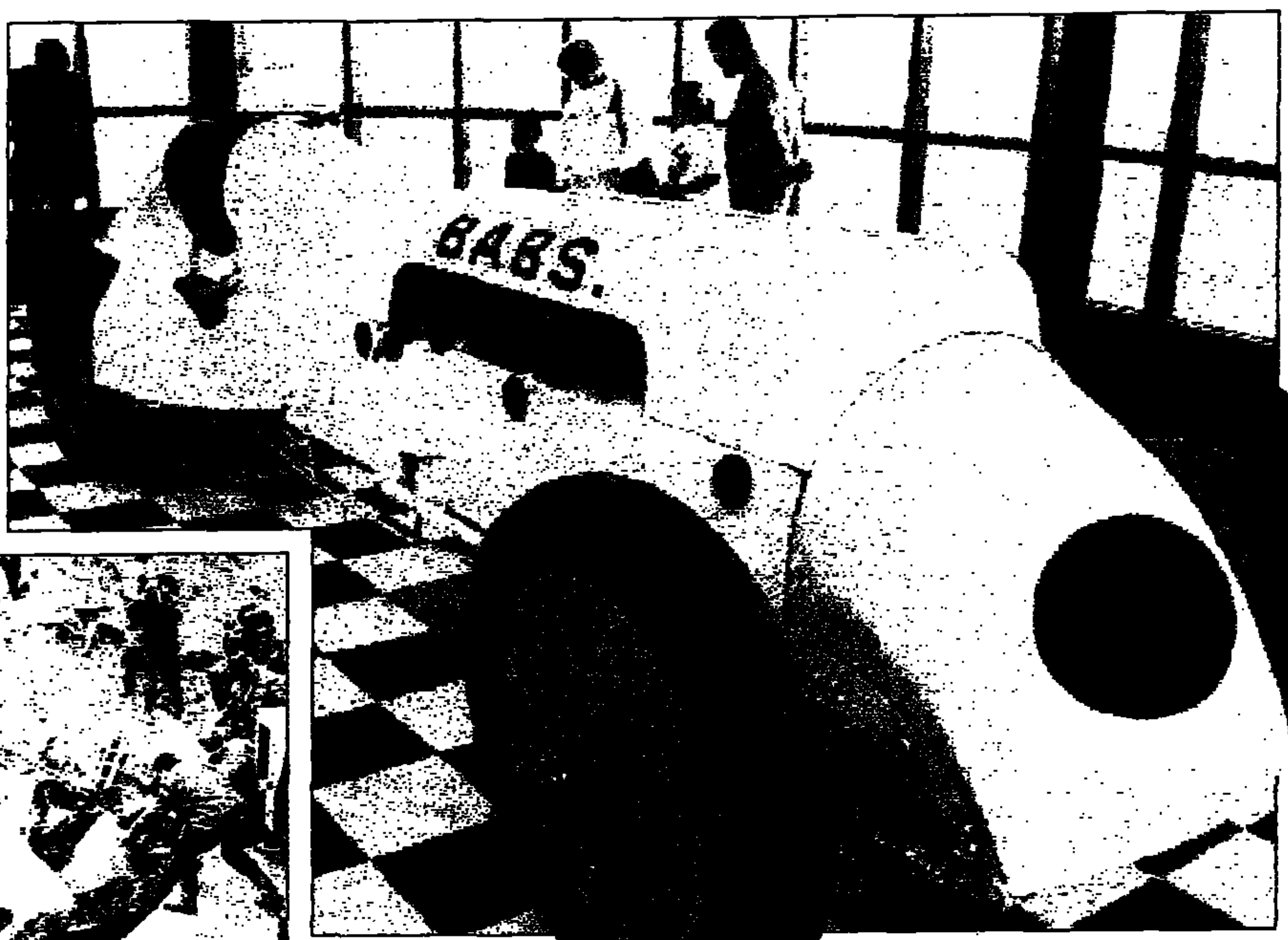
Sally Seward recounts the wrangle over the resurrection of Babs, the car tragically raced by Britain's forgotten record-breaker, John Parry Thomas

How a lost hero's legend was exhumed



The burnt-out wreckage of Babs is dug out in 1969, left. Restored, above, as a relic, and with Parry Thomas, its ill-starred driver, right

The stretch of sand on which John Godfrey Parry Thomas died is almost as obscure as the one-time hero of British motoring himself. Parry Thomas broke the world land-speed record twice but died horrifically in an attempt on the long beach at Pendine Sands in South Wales.

He should be remembered as a hero who gave up a promising career in the motor industry for record-breaking glory. Yet 70 years later, his memory only evokes a strange wrangle over the ownership of his car, nicknamed "Babs".

The car lay wrecked under Pendine Sands after the crash which claimed Parry Thomas's life on March 3, 1927. Forty-two years later, Owen Wyn Owen salvaged the rotting hulk and spent 15 years restoring it — only to discover that he might not be considered the rightful owner.

Pendine Community Council and the National Museum of Wales argued that the car, driven by a Welshman, must be part of the nation's heritage. Owen was forced to set up his own trust and agreed to share the car with the council and museum.

Now 70, Owen, a retired engineering lecturer, is permitted to drive Babs for two months each summer while the car spends the rest of its life as a record-breaking relic at Pendine Sands or inside Cardiff's Industrial and Maritime Museum.

Owen says: "The trust has agreed about the car and it's the right solution — it's basically Welsh property now. July and August are reserved for Babs to be shown at Pendine and the rest of the time is spent in the museum or with me.

"When I was a boy I read about Parry Thomas and the buried car and that image stayed with me. Years later I thought I would do something in recognition of his achievement because he'd been forgotten."

Thanks to Owen, Parry Thomas's memory has been resurrected somewhat after 70 years of obscurity. Parry Thomas's low profile is probably due to his inability to be a public relations man. His reclusiveness was poles apart from his rival, Donald Campbell, who was a high-profile society figure who could sense when a popping flash-bulb meant maximum coverage for his adventures.

"Parry Thomas was a highly respected, brilliant engineer," says Roger Ramage, of the Brooklands Museum at Weybridge, Surrey, where there is a collection of the driver's memorabilia.

The son of a vicar, Parry Thomas went to school in Oswestry where his love of engineering was nurtured. His mother was appalled, preferring the church or the army for her son but when he could not be swayed, she supported him until his breakthrough in 1917 when he was appointed chief engineer at Leyland Motors.

There he produced the fabled 7.2-litre Leyland Eight, the first car produced in Britain with a straight eight-cylinder engine. It was launched in 1920 to compete with Rolls-Royce, but production lasted only two years with 18 of the leviathan cars built.

Parry Thomas had been allowed to race in one, and soon his lust for speed became all-consuming. At the age of 37, he gave up his well-paid career to start racing.

He raced a Higham Special, for which he paid £125 in 1924. It was a crude vehicle, but with money tight he opted for the cheapest way of getting a fast car. The car had belonged to Count Zborowski and under its bonnet sat a 12-cylinder chain-drive Liberty aeroplane engine which developed a mighty 400 horsepower.

Parry Thomas then made modifications to the long-nosed monster and christened it Babs, some say after the young daughter of Archie Frazer Nash, the legendary motoring pioneer.

Parry Thomas had already hurtled to more than 171mph in two record attempts in 1926 in his Thomas Special, but he wanted to break the 180mph barrier. His attempt was set for the Spring of 1927, the car readied and the long, flat beach of Pendine Sands cleared.

On the day scheduled for the record attempt, Parry Thomas was suffering from flu and was at Pendine Sands against the advice of his doctors. But he felt forced to make his attempt because he knew that his great contemporary and record-breaking rival, Henry Segrave, was on his way to Daytona Sands in the United States along with his expensive and much more powerful Sunbeam.

If Parry Thomas was to hit the 180mph mark first, it was now — or lose the initiative to Segrave.

After two runs, Babs was still to break the barrier. Parry Thomas was anxious but confident, and turned the car's long white nose to face the sands for a third run. The huge engine roared and the car rumbled forward to gather speed; the speedometer was turning past 179mph when the record attempt turned to tragedy: Babs clipped a stray stone not cleared from the beach and a drive chain snapped.

Babs skidded and slewed for a quarter of a mile before somersaulting three times and bursting into flames. The mechanics, first to reach the scene, discovered Parry Thomas dead, virtually decapitated; the drive chain had whipped through the windscreen.

Parry Thomas was buried close to Brooklands in a churchyard at Byfleet — and Babs, fire-damaged, a virtual wreck, was buried in a huge hole on Pendine Sands. However, she was only waiting for the day when she would be exhumed to carry on the memory of one of Britain's great motoring heroes.

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THE TIMES 2

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SATURDAY MARCH 8 1997

MICHAEL SCOTT

Right tasty: Mike Darrington, managing director of Greggs, centre, Malcolm Simpson, financial director, right, and David Parker, retail operations director, reported a 20 per cent increase in pre-tax profits for 1996 to £15.7 million. Earnings per share were 95.8p (79p) and the total dividend is 32p (26p)

Littlewoods ends talks to buy Freemans from Sears

By Jon Ashworth

LITTLEWOODS, the pools-to-retailing group, has broken off negotiations to buy the £395 million Freemans mail order business from Sears, leaving its expansion plans in disarray.

The move could spark a bidding scramble for Freemans, and is a blow to James Ross, chairman of Littlewoods, who is struggling to refocus the group after years of upheaval. Only three days ago, Littlewoods put its 135 high street shops up for sale — part of a drive to concentrate on home shopping. Part of the anticipated proceeds of £500 million or more would have financed the Freemans acquisition. The deal, announced in January, received an early setback when it was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC). Littlewoods hoped to secure an exclusive deal with Sears, but was informed on Wednesday that it had received "approaches from a number of parties". They are thought to include N Brown, the Manchester mail order company.

Littlewoods conceded yesterday the timing was "unfortunate", but did its best to put a positive gloss on events. The Freemans acquisition would have boosted its presence in the agency market, where Littlewoods is second to Great Universal Stores. A company spokesman said the sale of Littlewoods stores would proceed as planned. "It's all systems go. This will have no impact on the stores sale."

The development is a high-risk move by Liam Strong, the embattled Sears chief executive, who hopes to distribute the Freemans sale proceeds to shareholders through a share buyback or special dividend. Sears said it was reviewing the new approaches, and hoped to conclude negotiations "in weeks rather than months".

Mr Strong said: "Consolidation in the mail order market will result in benefits for Freemans, its customers, and Sears shareholders. It remains the board's intention to achieve the price expected for Freemans, and to return the cash proceeds to ordinary shareholders. We are committed to achieving this in the shortest possible time frame."

Littlewoods said it remained keen to talk to Sears about an exclusive deal, but conceded privately that prospects were bleak. It insisted that its presence in home shopping remains strong. Its direct business, Index Extra, generated £160 million in sales last year — making it number three in the sector — and the company has ventured into the niche market with the purchase of a stake in Jacques Vert. Further deals are expected.

For Mr Ross, the former chief executive of Cable and Wireless, the week's events are an embarrassment. He has been working on a strategic review with Bain & Company, the management consultant, and has enjoyed a spell of relative boardroom calm. Feuding among descendants of Sir John Moores, Littlewoods founder, and his brother, Cecil, had threatened to overwhelm the group. He said: "Our intention to be a world-class home-shopping business remains unchanged."

Tempus, page 28

Former NatWest trader resigns new job

By Robert Miller
Banking Correspondent

KYRIACOS PAPOUIS, the former NatWest derivatives trader at the centre of an investigation into a £50 million "black hole", has resigned from his job with a US broker.

Bear Stearns, a US securities house, yesterday confirmed his departure. A spokeswoman said: "We have accepted the resignation of Kyriacos Papouis, an interest rate options dealer in our derivatives department. We have conducted a thorough review of his open trading positions and are satisfied that they were all booked and valued properly. We have notified the Securities and Futures Authority (the UK watchdog for brokers and futures dealers) of his resignation."

Mr Papouis, who left NatWest Markets in December, has retained Stephen Pollard, a partner in Kingsley Napley, the City law firm. Mr Pollard represented Nick Leeson, the rogue trader whose dealings on the Far East money markets caused the £830 million collapse of Barings two years ago.

NatWest is expected to conclude its internal investigation into the £50 million "black hole" some time next week. The bank's investigators are looking at how the losses, incurred on the interest rate options market, could have gone undetected for so long.

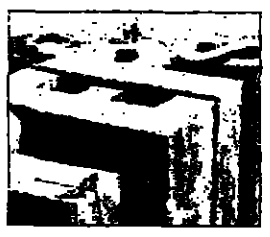
Neil Dodgeson, Mr Papouis's immediate supervisor, has been suspended "for failing to supervise, pending the conclusion of an internal inquiry".

Interest rate options are instruments used to limit or cap potential loss-making positions in the event of volatile movements in world interest rates.

WEEKEND MONEY

31 Anne Ashworth on testing times for the City watchdog

INVESTMENT



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BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100	4420.3	(+21.0)
Yield	3.63%	
FTSE All share	2153.44	(+8.19)
Nikkei	18198.74	(+157.41)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7003.19	(+58.49)*
S&P Composite	806.85	(+8.29)*
Federal Funds	[illegible]	[illegible]
Long Bond	96[illegible]*	(97$^{27}/_{32}$)
Yield	6.86%*	(6.88%)
3-mth Interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	111[illegible]	(111$^{7}/_{8}$)
New York:		
$	1.6035*	(1.6150)
London:		
$	1.6047	(1.6121)
DM	2.7583	(2.7704)
FFr	9.2960	(9.3431)
SFr	2.3829	(2.4002)
Yen	195.68	(196.00)
£ Index	98.1	(98.4)
London:		
DM	1.7190*	(1.7165)
FFr	5.7940*	(5.7875)
SFr	1.4840*	(1.4820)
Yen	121.93*	(121.13)
$ Index	104.3	(104.2)
Tokyo close Yen 121.15		
Brent 15-day (May)	$19.75	($19.35)
London close	$349.45	($352.25)

* denotes midday trading price

Litigation
GKN, the engineering group, will be embroiled in US litigation for at least another 18 months. Page 26

A City goal for Birmingham

By Alasdair Murray

BIRMINGHAM CITY may be languishing close to the bottom of football's first division, but the club scored a goal in the City when its shares raced to a 16 per cent premium on the first day of dealings on the stock market.

The shares, which now trade on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM), rose 8p to 58p, valuing the company at £29 million. The flotation raised £7.5 million to invest in the club.

Karren Brady, who becomes the youngest female chief executive of a quoted company, saw the value of her 750,000 share options increase to £435,000. Trevor Francis, the manager, is believed to have purchased 40,000 shares, while Steve Bruce, the team captain, took a stake of 50,000 shares. Birmingham's arrival on the AIM lifted the total new money raised on the smaller companies' market beyond £1 billion yesterday.

About 260 companies are quoted on the market with a total capitalisation of more than £6 billion.

Birmingham said that the issue was substantially oversubscribed. There were 7,000 individual applications, of which 1,900 were from season-ticket holders.

Birmingham City is at present five places off the bottom of the table after a disastrous run of form that has seen them lose seven of their last eight games and could face a tough battle to avoid relegation at the end of the season.

Lilley phone poll on pension plan

By Marianne Curphey

PETER LILLEY, the Social Security Secretary, personally canvassed the UK's biggest life companies for their responses to the proposed privatisation of pensions.

On the day the proposals were published, he and a number of his officials phoned the major players in the industry to gauge their reaction.

Until then, his plans for reform of the state pension had been kept under wraps for fear of the political damage that could have been done had incomplete information leaked out. So secret were the proposals that the insurance industry was taken by surprise by the announcement. Mr Lilley's first opportunity to gather responses from insurers was on Wednesday.

Among those contacted by Mr Lilley were Richard Branson, head of the Virgin empire and founder of Virgin Direct, which sells pensions by phone; Sir Peter Davis, chief executive of Prudential Corporation, the biggest name in UK life and pensions; and David Prosser, chief executive of Legal & General.

Tony Wood, marketing manager of Virgin Direct, said: "Richard's reaction is that this is a good step, but it is a long time overdue. We remain concerned that the traditional pension companies are being given a massive golden goose, and we question whether the industry in its present form really deserves, and is equipped to handle, such a large responsibility."

Anne Ashworth, page 31

Subbuteo loses home fixture

By Adam Jones

SUBBUTEO, the table-top football game invented in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, in 1947, is no longer to be made in Britain.

The decision of Hasbro, the US toy group, to shift production of several games to Ireland and Spain, will cause 250 redundancies. The company is closing two Waddington Games factories, in Castle Gate, near Leeds, and Paddock Wood, Kent.

Hasbro bought the games division of Waddington, a listed printing and packaging company, for £50 million in 1994. Waddington devised the Cluedo game and made Monopoly, an American invention, under licence in the UK. It bought the rights to Subbuteo after England's World Cup triumph in 1966.

Between them, the last two Waddington factories produced Subbuteo and Monopoly pieces, craft toys and three-dimensional jigsaws for Hashro.

The company said the UK factories are outdated and have continued to be less efficient than purpose-built Hasbro plants overseas, where spare capacity exists. The Castle Gate factory, which employs 200, was designed as a First World War munitions building. Bryr Ellis, managing director of Hasbr JK, said the "difficult but necessary decision has nothing to do with the cost or quality of British labour". He said: "The children's entertainment market is extremely competitive."

The closures will happen on June 7. The mouldings processes will be transferred to its big Irish factory in Waterford with other operations diverted to Valencia in Spain.

Ian McCartney, Labour's Chief Employment Spokesman, said: "Yet again a major company is exporting jobs to other European countries which operate a minimum wage and the social chapter."

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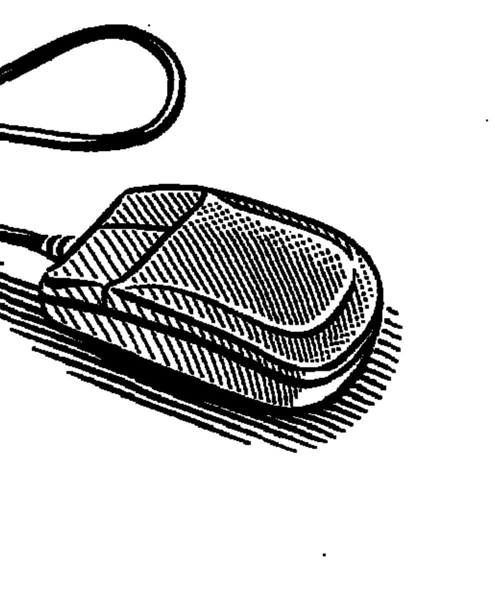

This year, American households will purchase more home computers than televisions. And, chances are, many of them will be 'tuning in' to the Internet, the fastest growing human institution ever made.

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Cash call by Saville Gordon

J Saville Gordon, the property group, has agreed to buy Rutland Industrial Estates Limited (RIEL) for £605,000 and then finance the purchase, for £46 million, of property portfolios from Peel Holdings and the Royal London Mutual Insurance Society through a rights issue.

At 55p per share, the five-for-six issue will raise £43.6 million. Roger Carey, part-owner of RIEL, which was negotiating the property deal on its own account, will become chief executive of J Saville Gordon.

Torex ahead

Torex, the tool hire and computer management systems company, lifted 1996 pre-tax profits to £1.47 million (£527,000). Profits were helped by the purchase of Smart Terminals for £4.8 million. Earnings were 4.3p a share (2.4p). A 1.6p final dividend makes a 2p total (1.5p).

Argent sales

Argent, the property investment and development group, has sold two distribution units, in Didcot and Bicester, to British Telecom Pension Scheme for £38 million, reflecting a net yield of 7.3 per cent. The shares were unchanged at 471p.

GKN plans to appeal over $600m award

BY OLIVER AUGUST

GKN, the engineering group, will be embroiled in US litigation for at least a further 18 months after its decision yesterday to appeal a $600 million damages award.

Meineke Mufflers, a GKN subsidiary, was being sued by its franchisees, who are alleging that Meineke defrauded them by diverting advertising funds. The $600 million includes punitive damages as well as compensation.

It is the highest commercial damages award against a British company by an American court. Ted Pearce, Meineke's senior counsel, said: "This is begging to be appealed. The appeal would last 18 months or more." He said that several secondary issues had to be resolved before the appeal could be lodged.

In London a group spokesman said that the appeal had a good chance of success. "Given that GKN is advised that it has very strong substantive and procedural grounds for doing so, it will appeal as soon as possible," he said.

GKN declared a £270 million provision resulting from the case, only hours after announcing its full-year results on Thursday. The group earned record pre-tax profits of £362.8 million in the year to December 31, up from £322.4 million in 1995. No provision was made before the damages were announced to avoid appearing to admit guilt. After the exceptional charge the accounts will now show a pre-tax profit of £80 million.

The charge was set at £270 million, rather than £400 million, after a 34 per cent cut in the damages. The dividend will not be affected by the damages provision. The shares closed 46p higher, at 1,020p, after dipping briefly to below 950p in early trading.

Dealers were reassured by GKN's determination to appeal, and an out-of-court settlement is on the cards again. It is considered unlikely that the franchisees will get the full £270 million.

Andy Chambers, industry analyst at SocGen, said: "The share price has been absolutely trashed by various press comments in recent weeks, indicating that they could have up to $800 million of liability. The market was over-discounting the worst-case scenario. We now have a clear figure of the provision and likely cash outflow from the litigation and we can ascertain what the real impact on earnings is likely to be."

PETER NICHOLLS

John Byford, left, the chairman of Litho, who is to become non-executive in May next year, with Mike Hammond, the managing director who will become chief executive. The group, Britain's largest independent supplier of printing and graphic arts products, yesterday reported a rise in 1996 pre-tax profits to £7.29 million (£6.64 million). Earnings rose to 18p (16.6p) a share; the total dividend is 8.15p (7.6p), with a final 5p due on May 30.

Watchdog fines broker £10,000 for 'churning'

BY ROBERT MILLER

A PRIVATE client broker has been fined and suspended by a City watchdog for "churning" investors' portfolios, including those of two elderly sisters.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the regulator for brokers and futures dealers, said that between January and November 1994, David Porter, who worked for Robson Cotterell, of Bournemouth, had undertaken 188 and 189 trades respectively on the two client accounts.

The watchdog added that the overall value of the trades were "more than four times the values of the portfolio. Stocks were repeatedly traded rather than held, and a number of stocks were traded on four or more occasions . . ."

Mr Porter was suspended from the SFA register of representatives for 12 months, reprimanded and fined £10,000 with similar costs. His employer, Robson Cotterell, was reprimanded, fined £20,000, with costs of £10,000, and required to refund a proportion of commission and other charges paid by two clients.

The SFA said that after Mr Porter was questioned by SFA inspectors about his trading on the two client accounts he "devised a letter from a client purporting to thank the firm for its active management of the accounts".

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Shares continue upward progress

LONDON shares rose to a record high yesterday as markets in the UK and America shrugged off stronger than expected jobs data from America. The FT-SE 100 closed up 21 points, at 4,420.3, while the Dow Jones industrial average rose 58.49 points, to 7,003.19 in early trading.

US non-farm payrolls rose by 339,000 in February, well above market expectations, compared with 247,000 in January. The overall unemployment rate declined 0.1 per cent to 5.3 per cent. But average hourly earnings rose by a less than expected 0.2 per cent. Much of the improvement in jobs was attributed to warmer than expected weather, which boosted employment in construction. As a result economists do not expect the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates on March 25.

ITT sells Madison stake

ITT, the hotels group that is fighting a $6.5 billion bid from Hilton Hotels, has sold its half share in Madison Square Garden, the New York arena, for $650 million. The purchaser is Cablevision Systems, which owns the other half of the arena. The deal includes the New York Nicks basketball team and the Rangers hockey team as well as the MSG cable-TV network. ITT said it represented an 81 per cent gain on the $360 milllion it paid for the stake two years ago.

WT Foods share placing

WT FOODS, the specialist foods manufacturer, is raising £7.85 million through a share placing and open offer to fund the acquisition of Chadha International, an importer and distributor of Chinese and other oriental foods, for £6.7 million. WT also announced the sale of Red Rose Velvets, a cotton velvet manufacturer, to the vendors of Chadha for £600,000. New WT shares are being offered at 30p. Existing shares were unchanged at 33p yesterday.

Whitbread agrees sale

WHITBREAD has agreed the conditional sale of its Keg restaurant business to Raleigh Corporation of Canada for £23 million. Keg operates 63 managed and 18 franchised restaurants in Canada and the Pacific North West. David Thomas, Whitbread chief executive designate, said Keg was non-core. "Now is a good time for us to sell the business as it is producing sales growth and trading more profitably," he said. Whitbread will continue to concentrate on Europe.

Warning by Hawtin

SHARES in Hawtin, the manufacturer and distributor, dropped 6p to 40p after the group said that it was likely to report a loss from its American distribution business in the first half of the year because of the costs of replacing its distribution agreement for Barclay Leisure products in the US. The company said that during the time taken to establish a new distributor in America there had been a loss of sales that had not yet been made up.

Compass in Swiss deal

COMPASS, the contract catering group, is to take a 20 per cent stake in Selecta, a food vending machine company. Selecta, part of Valora, the Swiss group, will soon be floated on the Swiss stock exchange. Compass's investment, which is unlikely to exceed £50 million when the flotation price is set, is to be funded by cash and equity. It forms part of a co-operation agreement which will see Compass buying all the food for Selecta's European vending and food service.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $ . . .	2.14	1.98
Austria Sch	20.37	18.87
Belgium Fr	59.77	55.47
Canada $	2.300	2.140
Cyprus Cyp£ .	0.854	0.799
Denmark Kr ...	11.08	10.28
Finland Mkk ..	8.80	8.15
France Fr	9.69	9.04
Germany Dm .	2.91	2.70
Greece Dr	451	425
Hong Kong $	13.10	12.10
Iceland	120	100
Ireland Pt	1.09	1.01
Israel Shk	5.71	5.06
Italy Lira	2861	2686
Japan Yen	209.00	193.00
Malta	0.659	0.604
Netherlds Gld	3.251	3.021
New Zealand $	2.44	2.22
Norway Kr	11.70	10.90
Portugal Esc ..	287.00	268.50
S Africa Rd	7.76	6.96
Spain Pta	244.50	227.50
Sweden Kr	12.95	12.15
Switzerland Fr	2.51	2.33
Turkey Lira	206700	194700
USA $	1.708	1.578

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday

THE SUNDAY TIMES

PILE-UP

❝At the Geneva Motor Show last week, it was business as usual. But away from the glitz and the gleaming metal, a shadow is falling across Western Europe's car industry❞

In Business, tomorrow

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Lonrho appoints new chairman

BY JON ASHWORTH

SIR JOHN CRAVEN, who took the helm at Morgan Grenfell in the wake of the Guinness affair, has been made non-executive chairman of Lonrho, the pan-African trading conglomerate.

Sir John, 56, succeeds Sir John Leahy, who is to step down at the annual meeting on March 20. He remains a non-executive director. The move completes a boardroom reshuffle that sees Dieter Bock, the German property entrepreneur, depart to pursue new interests. Mr Bock sold his 18.6 per cent of Lonrho to Anglo American in October, and resigned as chief executive in favour of Nicholas Morrell.

Mr Morrell aims to unbundle the empire built over three decades by Tiny Rowland, Lonrho's founder. Under plans unveiled more than a year ago, Lonrho would be split into two companies, one focusing on mining and the other on trading. Lonrho is negotiating a sale of its Princess Hotels.

Sir John Craven rescued Morgan Grenfell after Guinness — the bank advised on the Distillers bid — and negotiated its sale to Deutsche Bank.

BSkyB breaks off digital-TV talks

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

BSKYB has broken off talks with Kirch Gruppe over the launch of a digital-television service in Germany.

BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times, was seeking to take a 49 per cent stake in DF1 — a joint venture digital-television satellite project aimed at the lucrative German market.

A provisional agreement between the two companies was signed in July 1996. But the company said last month that the deal had run into problems. It added yesterday that it had terminated the heads of agreement because of "a failure to agree on a number of fundamental issues".

BSkyB shares fell 7p to 616½p. The company is understood to be exploring new opportunities in continental Europe.

☐ Three UK cable companies — Telewest Comunications, Bell Cablemedia and Nynex CableComms Group — yesterday agreed a deal with General Instrument, the US electronics company, to supply set-top boxes for decoding digital TV.

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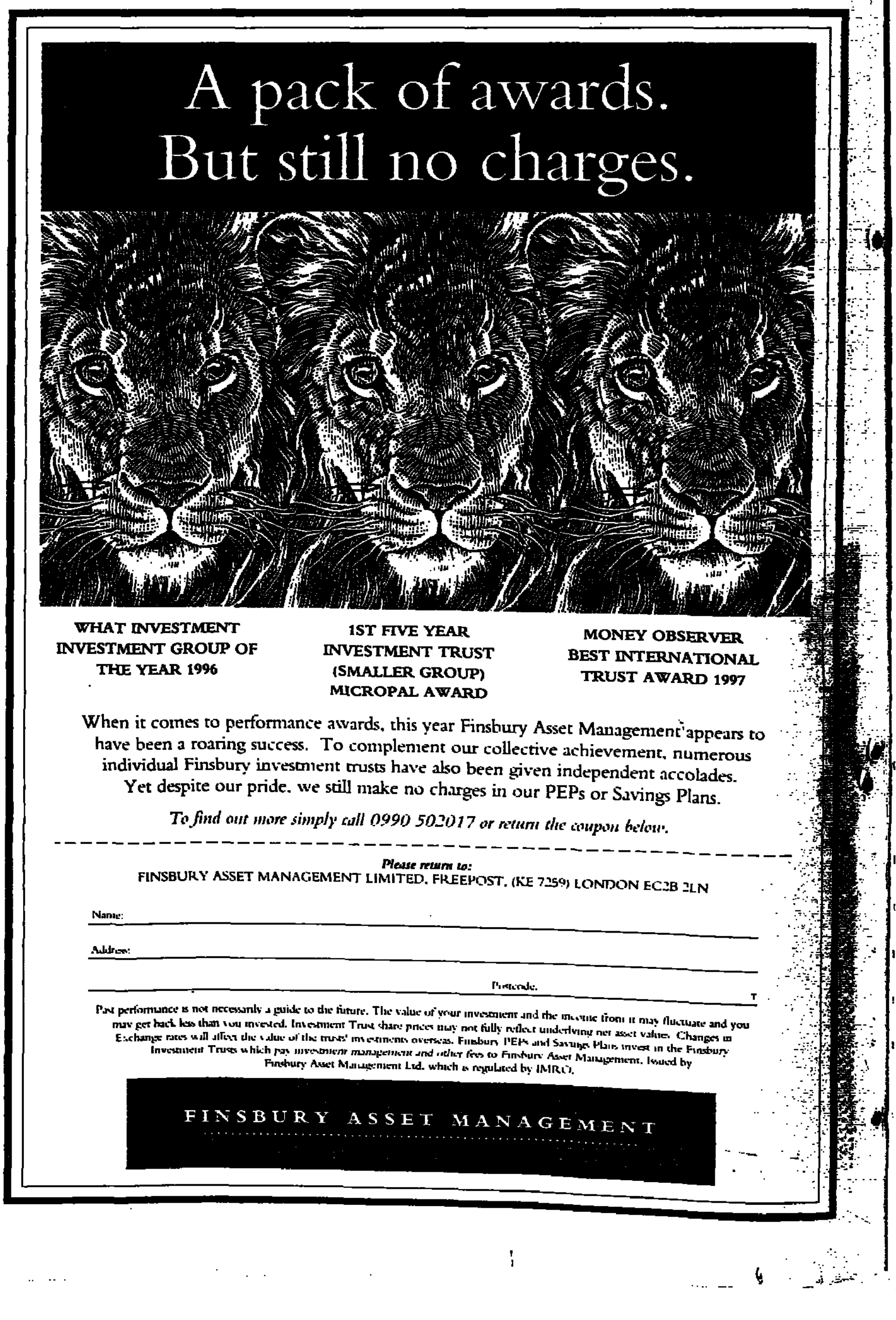

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: EDWARD GILLESPIE

Job for stayer who can keep one jump ahead

Robert Miller meets a managing director determined to create the right atmosphere for a premier event in the racing calendar

ANYONE who has ever participated in a sporting event will tell you that preparation is all. If you don't get it right beforehand it is unlikely to come good on the day, as Edward Gillespie, the managing director of Cheltenham Racecourse, should know.

Next week 150,000 people will descend on the picturesque town of Cheltenham to celebrate the annual three-day festival of National Hunt racing. There may be swankier race meets, and no doubt richer pickings to be had elsewhere, but the Cotswold course is where the *aficionados* of the jump game gather year after year to admire the horses, applaud the jockeys' bravery, meet old friends, drink and eat copious amounts, and generally enjoy the *craic*. Even those who are no longer able to make the trip maintain their links by having their ashes scattered over the course.

It is Gillespie's job to ensure that all the celebrants, led by their patron, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, the Irish Ambassador and 5,000 fans of his fellow countrymen who make the annual pilgrimage, leave on Thursday evening with happy memories. A botched race, a stolen wallet or a lack of loos can spoil an otherwise memorable festival.

Besides the racing, culminating in Thursday's £200,000 Gold Cup sponsored by the Tote, the main talking point is likely to be the £10 million new grandstand to be opened officially by the Queen Mother on Wednesday. Topped by a panoramic restaurant, where tables and food cost between £345 and £395 a head, the grandstand represents racing in the 21st century.

The imposing new structure boasts a museum to past equine and human triumphs, including a mechanical horse for aspirant jockeys, corporate boxes, a spacious Irish theme bar complete with band, as well as the Tote and television screens. There are also superb viewing platforms for the disabled whose needs are recognised and incorporated around the course.

The grandstand will certainly be a major talking point and Gillespie is braced for some pithy views from the die-hard traditionalists. One feature of the new building is the amount of room allocated to loos. That, says Gillespie, is at the insistence of Lord Vestey, the chairman, who mingles with the crowds on race days and listens to the feedback. Now the enormously spacious facilities have irreverently been dubbed "Sam's loos" after the chairman.

But the 44-year-old Gillespie, who once rode in an amateur race around the course to raise funds for Comic Relief, and came last, has to move with the times. Cheltenham has an annual turnover of nearly £10 million and Gillespie, a graduate from the University of York — "it had a decent racecourse" — with a degree in politics, presides over a flourishing business.

Around £6 million is generated directly by the festival, with a further £1.5 million indirectly from television and advertising, and the remainder from a dozen or so National Hunt racing days in the year. Additional revenue is raised from hiring out the grandstand for conferences and weddings. Already Gillespie has a weather-eye cocked to the financing of the next grandstand. "This new one replaced a stand built in the 1950s," he explains. "Nowadays they have about a 40-year life cycle."

> ‘The festival celebrates our sport. People come, dare I say, for a fix’

Like any other businessman, Gillespie's working week has its fair share of bread-and-butter jobs. Cheltenham is just one of 12 courses, from Epsom and Aintree to Market Rasen and Huntingdon, owned by the Jockey Club through Racehorse Holdings Trust, and the managing director has to keep a tight control on budgets and administration. This particular working week runs from Monday to tomorrow, and has included daily tours of the grandstand, a special inspection of the Royal Box on Tuesday, security meetings with police on Thursday, and a briefing to staff supervisors yesterday. The first "star" to arrive was Imperial Call, last year's Gold Cup winner, who likes to make the journey from Ireland early to settle in and to establish territorial dominance.

One of Wednesday's more unusual jobs was to find accommodation, almost impossible during festival week when hotel prices double and people have to stay as far afield as Birmingham, for a French trainer and his wife.

"We have spent the last nine or ten months planning this year's festival and work actually begins on preparing the course in the first week of January. Every stage of the planning has to be communicated to the staff because it is vital that everyone actually knows what is going on," says Gillespie, who is married to Alyson, a music teacher, and has three children, Siobahn, 17, George, 14, and Rosanna, 8. Gillespie has 14 full-time members of staff, swollen to thousands in the run-up to and during the racing. While the managing director roams all over the course, picking up a stray milk bottle, checking that plants will be in place on the front of the grandstand, worrying about a step up from the Irish Bar over which people might trip, Philip Arkwright, the clerk of the course, is patrolling the turf. Between them, Gillespie, Arkwright and Rosemary Hammond, who is in charge of sales, have clocked up an impressive 53 Cheltenham festivals.

Ready for the off: Edward Gillespie, managing director of Cheltenham racecourse. "We have spent the last nine or ten months planning for the festival"

The state of the course has been the subject of some controversy. Martin Pipe, the champion trainer, said on Wednesday that although the ground was not as fast as many had feared, it was "puddingy" in a number of places. Gillespie, who became a racecourse manager at the age of 22 "because, like many others, I was a frustrated jockey and not sufficiently brave", says of the course debate: "I'm not short of advice on what we should be doing."

If he should ever fancy a career in the City — although it is hard to envisage him cooped up in the Square Mile — Gillespie will not be short of contacts. Cheltenham boasts almost as many followers from the Mecca of money as it does from the Emerald Isle, and the tented village and boxes will be overflowing with a veritable Who's Who from the world of business and finance.

This year's list of Cheltenham supporters and backers includes Guinness, sponsors of Tuesday's £75,000 Arkle Challenge Cup and the Pure Genius festival awards; Royal & SunAlliance, the insurer and sponsor of Wednesday's £75,000 steeplechase and £45,000 Novice Hurdle; and Vodafone, through its recent acquisition of the Astec Buzz Shop.

Vodafone, coincidentally, is the current sponsor of the Derby, and was signed up when Gillespie was in charge of the Epsom race for a two-year period. Indeed, it was he who led the somewhat controversial decision to move the event from its traditional Wednesday slot to Saturday. Of that decision he says: "We were trying to bring the Derby up-to-date in a very short period. Even if it does revert to Wednesday we still had to make a clear statement at that time and it has been very effective."

The name of the game, says Gillespie, is to create the right atmosphere for people to meet each other in convivial surroundings but not to do deals other than betting, of course. Turnover on the Tote last year was almost £6 million and on the racecourse itself £1 million is gambled on each of the 20 races, in which some 360 horses will be running.

As most people look forward to a relaxing weekend Gillespie is girding himself for the climax of his working year. "The festival is a celebration of our sport. People come, dare I say it, for a fix. They are carried along on the emotion of it all and go away exhausted after three days of being totally immersed."

With 14,000 bottles of champagne, 20,000 bottles of wine and 50,000 bottles of beer, plus a lake of Guinness and Murpheys, the task of cheering the winners and commiserating with the losers should not be too difficult.

Building a new foundation for the hall of shame

HIDDEN ASSETS

Brocket Hall, the 18th-century stately home in Hertfordshire, has seen more than its fair share of scandal in its 200-year history. In February last year, Lord Brocket, a polo-playing former Cavalry officer, was jailed for five years after admitting to a £4.5 million insurance fraud involving four classic Italian sports cars. The army of press photographers that invaded the estate relayed superb images of the handsome house and the tranquil Broadwater Lake.

But still waters run deep and Brocket Hall's future had been uncertain for some time. The disastrous combination of Lord Brocket's passion for acquiring expensive classic cars, and his determination to cling to the stately home that he inherited as a 15-year-old at Eton, led him to attempt an inept insurance fraud in 1991 to counter mounting debts.

Lord Brocket is now in Ford open prison and last December Brocket Hall and its 534-acre estate and golf club were sold, on a 60-year lease, for £9 million to the CCA Group. The Hong Kong-based developer of luxury clubs and conference centres intends to spend £1 million developing the estate into a modern conference centre.

Brocket Hall was built between 1760 and 1775 by James Paine (1717-89), a great exponent of the English Palladian style, in the generation that followed Lord Burlington and William Kent. With Sir Matthew Laws as patron, Paine took on the remodelling of the property, which had seen various incarnations since the first Brocket Hall was built on the site in 1239. Most accounts suggest that Paine's was a new house, although its form was dictated by that of its predecessor. That had been a building of three ranges around a courtyard open to the north. Paine added a fourth range and installed a large staircase.

The character of the house varied according to the contrasting lifestyles of two of its patrons, Sir Matthew Laws and later his son (who became Lord Melbourne). Sir Matthew was a successful attorney who came to architecture late in life. By the time of his death in 1768, only the east and the new north range had been completed. The exteriors were relatively plain and the interiors were conservative in style.

His son was more socially ambitious and inclined to elaborate display. The south front he had built was grander in style and the principal rooms were finished with fine decorative ceilings. Grounds were landscaped, marble chimney pieces fitted and library bookcases designed by Chippendale (now one of only two examples remaining in the world). Cipriani, one of the 18th century's master craftsmen, was commissioned to paint the inset panels in the library and the drawing room's elaborate ceilings.

The son's architectural and decorative efforts paid off and his social ambitions were realised when he became the 1st Lord Melbourne, though this was largely, it is said, achieved through the efforts of his wife, who was a mistress of the flamboyant Prince Regent. The Prince, later crowned George IV, was a frequent visitor to Brocket Hall and created the Chinese suite of rooms, now known as the Prince Regent Suite. He also presented his mistress with a Reynolds painting, which hangs in the ballroom, and had a racecourse laid out on the Brocket parkland.

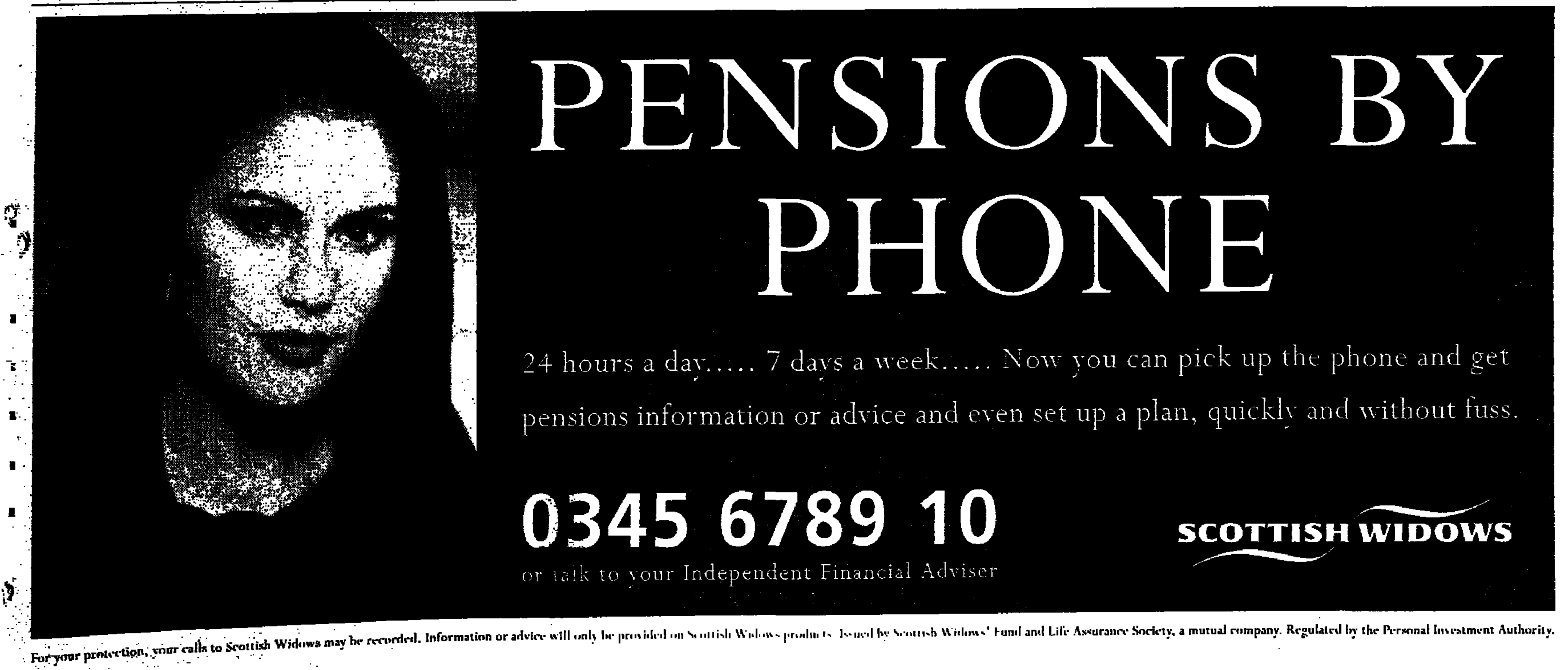
The 2nd Lord Melbourne was married to Lady Caroline Lamb, known for her passion for Lord Byron. Lady Caroline also had a penchant for practical jokes. She once arranged for herself to be served up as a surprise dish at Lord Melbourne's grand ballroom birthday dinner — she emerged naked from a giant soup tureen.

Lord Melbourne eventually became Prime Minister and formed a close friendship with Queen Victoria, who often visited Brocket Hall. On his death, the hall passed to his sister, who married Lord Palmerston, who also became Prime Minister.

Given the high levels of public attention that Brocket Hall has attracted, CCA will no doubt be hoping for a period of calm and privacy in which to make the most of its investment.

JOANNA PITMAN

Brocket Hall awaits its future as a conference centre



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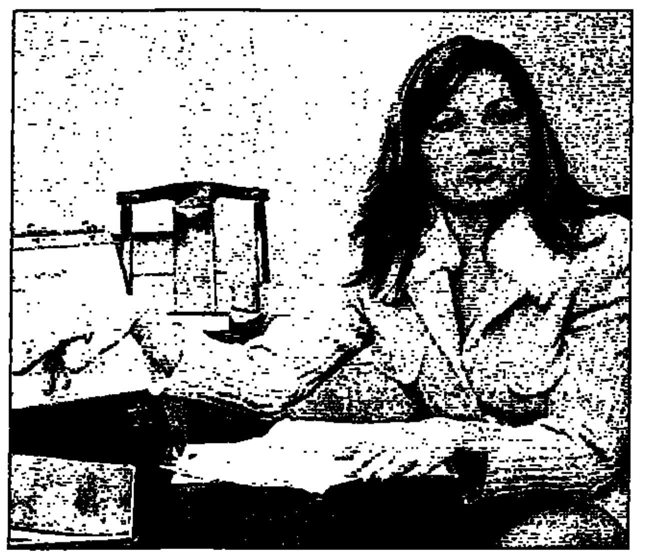
STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Compass share price set to lift on entry to top 100



Karren Brady of Birmingham City, launched on AIM at 58p

COMPASS, the contract caterer, ended the week on a flat note, with the price falling 15½p to 706½p as Accor, the French hotelier and its biggest shareholder, unloaded an 11.5 per cent holding.

But things should start to look up for Compass next week when it is admitted as a constituent of the top 100 companies. Such a move is almost certain to provide a boost to its share price, with confirmation of its appointment attracting the attention of the index-tracking funds.

Admission to the top 100 is calculated by the size of a company's stock market value. At the close of business last night Compass was valued at £2.29 billion. Others likely to be admitted to the exclusive band of constituent companies are **Southern Electricity**, unchanged at 440½p and valued at £2.10 billion, **British Land**, 1p firmer at 538½p (£2.5 billion) and **Amvesco**, formerly Invesco, ½p easier at 363½p (£2.24 billion).

They are likely to replace **Tate & Lyle**, down 5½p at 440½p (£1.93 billion), **Argos**, 1½p easier at 677½p (£1.94 billion), **Hanson**, down 7p at 294p (£1.96 billion) and **Smith & Nephew**, unchanged at 183¾p (£2 billion).

By the close of business last night almost 40 million Compass shares had changed hands after Accor had executed a put through in 36.5 million shares at 700p.

The rest of the equity market continued to be squeezed higher, with share prices breaching the 4,400 level to end the week on another high note. Investors continued to take their lead from Wall Street, where a sharp rise in the employment numbers was offset by a subdued set of US average earnings. This reduced the pressure for a rise in interest rates.

As a result, the FT-SE 100 index ended just a shade below its best of the day with a rise of 21.0 at a closing high of 4,420.3. Over the week the index has risen 112 points. A total of 924 million shares were traded yesterday.

GKN opened sharply lower, touching 958½p on the overnight news that a US court had ordered it to pay $598 million compensation to settle the Meineke Mufflers dispute. The sum awarded was far higher than the worst-case scenario painted by the group earlier in the week after reporting pre-tax profits of £368 million. The shares later bounced back to close 45½p higher at £10.20 as brokers took the view that any further uncertainty had now been dispelled.

Reckitt & Colman fell 16p to 807½p ahead of full-year figures next week as ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, downgraded its recommendation for the shares.

There was big turnover in **Redland** as the price rose 8p to 372p with more than 13 million shares changing hands. A line of five million shares went through the market at the 370p level.

Brokers also reported large turnover in **Asda**, with 36.7 million traded as the price held steady at 110½p. Word is that a number of brokers have begun to turn bearish of the shares, including Dresdner Kleinwort Benson.

Barclays Bank finished 3½p better at £11.14 as it resumed buying back its own shares. It paid £11.12 each for a total of one million shares and has now acquired 22 million of the 26 million required to complete its buyback programme.

BTR attracted support, rising 16½p to 276p as dealers continued to reflect on Thursday's profit numbers. NatWest Securities is urging clients to "add" to their holdings, while the advice from Credit Lyonnais Laing is to buy.

Sears, the Selfridges and Freemans retailer, slipped ½p to 81½p. Littlewoods, Britain's biggest privately owned company, has withdrawn its £395 million offer for Freemans after discovering Sears was in talks with another potential buyer. The offer by Littlewoods had already been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, but it had been expected to renew the attack once the bid had been cleared.

On AIM, **Birmingham City**, the Nationwide League football club headed by Karren Brady, managing director, had a promising start after being "substantially" oversubscribed after a placing at 50p. The price opened at 52½p and 64p before closing at 58p, a premium of 8p.

By contrast, **Manchester United**'s celebrations after its four-goal victory over Oporto FC in the European Cup proved to be short-lived. The price touched 640p before ending the session down 10p at 647½p after revived suggestions that football clubs are overvalued.

A large trade conducted at a sharp discount to the ruling market price left **Kingsbury Group**, the retailer, nursing a 20p fall at 165p. A line of 500,000 shares went through the market on Thursday at 185p, compared with the then middle price of 204p.

One trader was trying frantically to sort out a bad trading position in **Norcros** as the price fell a further 6½p to a new low of 81½p. Earlier this week shares in the building products group were unhinged by news of a disposal of 181,000 shares carried out by a main board director.

A profits warning left **Hawtin** 6p down at 40p, with *interim losses predicted*.

☐ **GILT-EDGED**: Bond prices in London spent much of the day tracking the performance of US Treasury bonds. After recovering from early falls, prices followed US T-bonds higher but failed to hold their best levels.

The June series of the long gilt finished three ticks better at £111$\frac{3}{16}$ as a total of 94,000 contracts were completed.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 put on £¼ at £105¼, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was a couple of ticks firmer at £103$\frac{27}{32}$.

☐ **NEW YORK**: Shares were higher as Wall Street breathed a sigh of relief after the release of February employment figures that appeared to be no threat to wage levels or interest rates. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 58.49 points higher at 7,003.19.

Hang on to your hats with Shield Diagnostics, down 6p at 602½p, after its recent spectacular run. Followers say further positive news is on the way. *A new broker will be appointed later this month as Shield begins a series of presentations. The shares are being talked another 200p higher before the end of the month.*

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Commercial Union	732½p	+49½p	Revived bid speculation
PPL Therapeutics	422½p	-89½p	Government withdraws funding
Forward Group	225p	+61p	PCB bids £129 million
Michael Page	551p	+56p	Interim Services bids £346 million
MFI Furniture	157p	-40p	Slowdown in sales growth
Mackie International	151½p	-19p	Bid talks terminated
Tomorrows Leisure	9¾p	+3¾p	Bid approach
Cairn Energy	577½p	+31p	Bid speculation
Kingsbury Group	165p	-39p	Seller at big discount

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	7003.19 (+58.49)
S&P Composite	806.85 (+8.29)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	18198.74 (+157.41)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	13337.35 (-79.01)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	764.96 (+0.29)
Sydney:	
AO	2438.5 (-8.9)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	3376.20 (-41.40)
Singapore:	
Straits	2178.27 (-1.66)
Brussels:	
General	12180.42 (-23.25)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2708.28 (+9.36)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	962.80 (+1.90)
London:	
FT 30	2920.3 (+8.8)
FT 100	4420.2 (+20.9)
FTSE Mid 250	4713.8 (+6.3)
FTSE 350	2183.4 (+8.8)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2200.11 (+1.26)
FT All-Share	2153.44 (+8.19)
FT Non Financials	2201.27 (+9.91)
FT Fixed Interest	119.45 (+0.10)
FT Govt Secs	95.7 (+0.15)
Bargains	54248
SEAQ Volume	924.2m
US$	1.6052 (-0.0062)
German Mark	2.7590 (-0.0102)
Exchange Index	95.1 (-0.3)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4055
£:SDR	1.1714
RPI	154.4 Jan (2.8%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	153.9 Jan (3.1%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Anglo-Welsh	103½	-	3
Aortech	136½		...
Birmingham City	58		...
C&B Publishing	175		...
Calldore Warrants	1		...
Cambridge Mini Res	14		...
Centrica (75½)	66½	+	2½
Core Group	333½		...
Energy Group (525)	528	-	½
Girovend Csh Sys	187½	+	5
Howle	30½		...
Infobank Intl	174	+	19
Nord Anglo Eductn	165	-	½
Psd Group	283½	-	3
Screen	6		...
TR Euro Gwth Wrts	59½	+	½
Technoplast	108		...
VFG	41½		...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Norbain	252½p (+18p)
Acorn Comp	202½p (+9p)
Porvair	300p (+10p)
Benchmark	256½p (+7p)
Ladbroke	243p (+7p)
Fuji Bank Y	702½p (+19p)
Vendome	529½p (+14p)
Sage Gp	666p (+17½p)
Prudential	596½p (+15p)
Tesco	347p (+7½p)
Redland	372p (+8p)
Rank Grp	444p (+8½p)
Legal & Gen	416p (+7½p)
McKechnie	562½p (+12p)
Card Gp	677½p (+10p)
Guinness	483½p (+7p)
Telemetrix	63½p (+7p)
FALLS:	
Kingsbury Grp	165p (-20p)
Telspec	185p (-12½p)
Peptide Thera	347½p (-20p)
Hanson	294p (-7p)
Reckitt Colm	807½p (-16p)
Vosper Thorny	913p (-17p)
Nat Aust Bk	785p (-13p)
Scotia	605p (-10p)
Photobition	427½p (-7p)
Man Utd	647½p (-10p)
Liberty Intl	493½p (-7p)
Thistle Hotels	186p (-6½p)
Kenwood App	133½p (-8p)
Norcros	81½p (-6½p)
P & O Dfd	670p (-7p)

Closing Prices Page 39

TEMPUS

Pensions for bears

IF PENSION provision is a worry for people, it could become a big headache for companies. The Pensions Act, parts of which come into force next month, puts more pressure on trustees to ensure that pension funds are adequately financed. Although many companies are still enjoying pension-fund holidays — a consequence of the 14-year bull market — the Act prescribes a minimum funding requirement (MFR) that could force trustees to make cash calls on companies if assets fall below the present value of the liabilities.

Typically, a UK pension fund is more than 80 per cent equities: a consequence of years of good share dividend growth and fund managers competing to outperform their peers. As long as the bull market continues and assets well exceed liabilities, that should not be a problem, but two factors could cause nervous trustees to demand a switch into fixed interest, and, ultimately, bigger contributions. The MFR could create a downward spiral. A falling equity market would encourage trustees to demand a more conservative asset allocation; under the guidelines for an average pension scheme, gilts should make up 60 per cent of the assets. The consequence of an asset shift to gilts would be a flight from equities and falling shares, further depressing the asset value of UK pension funds, now heavily weighted towards shares. That could eventually lead to a flurry of cash calls on companies.

Such a grim scenario looks implausible only to those used to a rising market. There are other risks: a cash-hungry Labour Government might well withdraw the tax credit on dividends paid to pension funds. A reduction in cashflow to pension schemes of more than £4 billion can only increase pressure on trustees to ensure that schemes are fully funded. That means cash calls on mature, underfunded schemes. Sensible corporate treasurers will be taking put options on this bull market to protect their companies from the cost of a cash call.

GKN

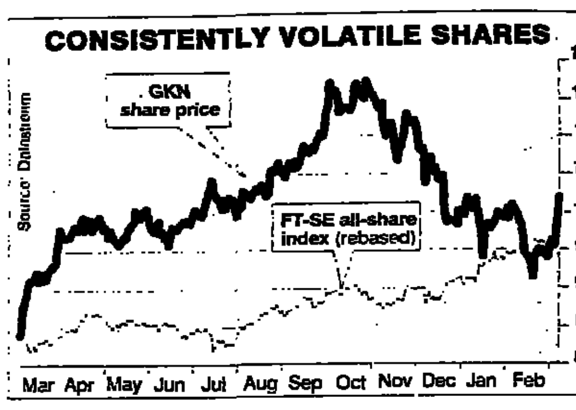
GKN, maker of the constant velocity joint, could have saved itself a huge amount of grief if it had settled the US damages case at the start. What was an insignificant legal problem has turned into a financial and public relations nightmare. Instead of celebrating its record profits this week, GKN managers had to justify their position over the conduct of a subsidiary years ago.

C. K. Chow, the new chief executive, tried to put the best gloss on it, but he must have been aggrieved that his promising start at the manufacturing group was marred by the previous decision to litigate.

The $600 million damages judgment more than wiped out the year's profits of £363 million, requiring a provision in the accounts, something the company had previously refused to do. Nevertheless, GKN is appealing against the judgment and must hope that the provision is not taken as a sign of weakness.

As far as investors are concerned, their worries about the dividend are unwarranted.

GKN's cash pile is large enough to pay Thursday's award of damages. Mr Chow has put his name behind the dividend. With the worst-case scenario provided for, the share market has finally taken heart from the company's record results — no mean achievement in a depressed automotive components market — and given the shares a boost.



Sears/Littlewoods

EVEN if Sears does not squeeze an extra penny from the prospective new buyer of Freemans, it will be jolly pleased to complete a deal. Referral of the Littlewoods transaction to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission put a damper on Liam Strong's efforts to restore his own and the company's credibility. Plans for a jumbo distribution to shareholders are on hold. Sears may experience some schadenfreude in making another retailer look foolish but the real reason to spurn Littlewoods is to escape the MMC. A combination of Littlewoods and Freemans would have more than 30 per cent of the market with huge savings from combining distribution and call centres. Hence, the interloper is likely to be another mail order operator rather than a high street retailer. Suspicion falls on N Brown, the direct mail order specialist. It would enjoy a quantum leap in market share by taking on Freemans's agency business. Otto Versand, the German group that owns Grattan, is a candidate; merging the two should fall short of the 25 per cent limit.

In hindsight, it is scarcely suprising that Sears kept its options open and that Littlewoods has been gazumped. Mail order businesses are prized among retailers desperate for ideas. Whether the assets will ever achieve more than their past pedestrian performance is another matter.

BAe

ONE of the property sector's little mysteries is why British Aerospace continues to hang on to Arlington Securities. BAe paid £278 million for the business park developer in 1989. The idea was that Arlington would turn BAe's vast tracts of surplus land into cash but the recession intervened and demand for office space plummeted, leaving BAe nursing losses.

The policy, says BAe, is to run Arlington's £500 million portfolio for cash, but the property market has changed.

City centres are no longer littered with empty new office blocks and the share prices of property companies are at huge premiums.

BAe could probably package Arlington's assets and get more than their net worth in a flotation. Such a window of opportunity may not last long.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	932 BID	May	1005-1003
May	948-947	Jul	1017-1012
Jul	958 SLR	Sep	1032-1030
Sep	968-967	Dec	1050-1042
Dec	974-973		
Mar	993-991		Volume: 7664

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Mar	1750-1735	Nov	1690-1680
May	1722-1720	Jan	1665 SLR
Jul	1720-1716	Mar	unq
Sep	1712-1710		Volume: 5081

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	303.4-99.8
Spot unq		Mar	305.0-00.0
May	308.8-08.1	May	300.0 BID
Aug	307.5-06.7	Jun	unq
Oct	303.5-02.2		Volume: 716

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on March 6

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	83.51	148.70	98.07
(+/-)	-1.87	+6.94	-3.49
Eng/Wales:	83.56	149.87	98.01
(+/-)	-1.98	+6.46	-2.84
(%)	+17.0	-12.0	-12.0
Scotland:	75.85	145.22	98.53
(+/-)	+2.91	+8.17	-5.80
(%)	-34.0	-20.0	-50.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	19.75	+0.40
Brent 15 day (Apr)	20.00	+0.50
Brent 15 day (May)	19.75	+0.55
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	21.25	+0.50
W Texas Intermediate (May)	21.10	+0.50

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	205 (+1)	208 (+1)
Gasoil EEC	170 (+6)	171 (+6)
3.5 Fuel Oil	80 (-2)	82 (-3)
Naphtha	190 (+5)	192 (+8)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Mar	168.75-69.00	Jun	172.50-72.75
Apr	170.25-70.50	Jul	173.50 SLR
May	171.50-71.75		Vol: 19053

BRENT (6.00pm)

Apr	20.00 SLR	Jul	19.40 BID
May	19.73-19.75	Aug	19.30 BID
Jun	19.57 BID		Vol: 35125

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	97.10	Mar	90.50
May	99.65	May	91.50
Jul	101.95	Sep	90.50
Sep	92.70	Nov	97.50
Nov	94.70	Jan	94.50
Volume: 359		Volume: 50	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	64.5	59.50
May	69.5	64.50
Jun	unq	75.50
		Volume: 43

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Apr 80.50-81.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Mar 97	1515	1490	1515
Apr 97	1605	1585	1601
May 97	1575	1555	1570
Jul 97	1330	1310	1330
Vol: 595 lots		Open Interest: 2840	

Index 1430 +11

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	2486.0-2487.0	2406.0-2408.0	1321975
Lead ($/tonne)	690.00-691.00	684.50-685.00	302025
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1237.5-1238.0	1249.0-1250.0	494975
Tin ($/tonne)	5870.0-5880.0	5925.0-5930.0	18440
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1660.0-1661.0	1689.0-1690.0	1423975
Nickel ($/tonne)	8070.0-8080.0	8170.0-8180.0	67098

LIFFE OPTIONS

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
Alld Dom	420	39½	46	52	2	11	15½
(*454½)	460	12½	21½	29½	15	29	31½
ASDA	110	5	8½	9½	3	5½	8
(*110½)	120	1½	4	5½	10	11½	14
Boots	650	37½	51	56½	6	18	23½
(*678½)	700	9½	23½	31	28	43	49
Br Airways	650	27½	42½	53	13	28	36
(*661)	700	7½	21	31	43	56½	64½
BP	700	26½	46	57	13½	27½	35½
(*711)	750	8	23½	34	43	55	62½
Br Steel	140	18	21	22	1	4½	6
(*156½)	160	4½	8½	11½	7½	14	16
C & W	500	23	37	47½	12½	25½	32½
(*507½)	550	5	16	26½	45	55½	62
CU	700	40	64½	79	21½	44½	59
(*732½)	750	19	45½	56½	51	72	87
ICI	700	45	65½	74½	4½	14	21
(*737)	750	16	35½	46	22½	34	44
Land Sec	750	50½	61	66½	2	14½	19½
(*793½)	800	16	29½	37½	17½	38	43
M & S	460	35½	44	50	3½	11½	13
(*490½)	500	10	20½	28½	17	28½	31½
Nat West	700	54	76	83	5½	17½	27½
(*744)	750	21	46	55	22½	37½	50
Safeway plc	360	17½	26	32	8	18	22½
(*367)	390	5½	12½	19	26	36	40½
Sainsbury	300	22	29	31½	3½	11	13½
(*316½)	330	6	12½	17	17	27	30
Shell	1050	48	59½	75½	20	36	46½
(*1081½)	1100	19	34	50½	49½	62	73½
Smkl Bch	900	49½	74	91	17	34	44½
(*928)	950	22½	48½	64½	40	58	69
Storehse	300	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trafalgar	50	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Zeneca	1800	102½	157	191	34	61	78½
(*1882½)	1900	51½	105½	137½	80½	108½	124½

Series		Apr	Jul	Oct	Apr	Jul	Oct
BAT Ind	550	16½	34½	39½	30	42	53½
(*550½)	600	5	17½	22½	70	77	86
Vodafone	280	23½	33	39	5½	12	16
(*296½)	300	12	22	29	13½	21½	26

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Grnd Met	460	33	42½	50	8½	15½	19½
(*479)	500	12½	22	30	28	38	39½
Ladbroke	240	12½	18½	22½	10	14	16½
(*243)	260	5½	10	14	23½	26	28½
Utd Bisc	240	9½	17	22	13½	16½	21½
(*241)	260	3½	9½	14½	28	30	34

March 7, 1997 Tot: 49146 Calls: 21769 Puts: 27377 FTSE Calls: 4236 Puts: 4179

*Underlying security price.

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
BAA	500	41½	53½	58	1½	10½	13
(*537½)	550	11½	21	29½	14½	31	35
Thames W.	650	48½	69	71½	9½	31	33½
(*689½)	700	19½	42	45	28	57	59

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
BTR	260	19	26	30½	8	17½	15½
(*276)	280	8½	15½	20½	18	21½	25½
Br Aero	1350	59	93	114½	46½	61½	73½
(*1356½)	1400	39	68½	90	75½	89	100
Br Telcm	420	24	33	36	10	22½	26
(*429)	460	7	15	18½	33½	49	51½
Cadbury	500	41½	51½	57½	10½	15	18
(*539)	550	12½	25	33½	32	39	42
Guinness	460	28	38	43½	11½	18	20
(*482½)	500	9	19½	24½	34½	40	41
GEC	360	31½	38½	42½	5	12	15½
(*381½)	390	14	21½	26½	17½	27	30½
Hanson	280	24	30	33½	7½	9	12½
(*294)	300	12½	19	22½	16½	18	21½
LASMO	240	16½	24½	28	9½	12	15
(*244)	260	8½	16	20	21	23½	26
LucasVarity	200	14½	21	24½	7	9½	14
(*207)	220	5½	12	15½	18	20½	25
Pilkingtn	140	12½	15	—	3½	8½	—
(*146)	160	4	6½	—	15	20	—
Prudential	550	52	66½	74½	9½	17	23½
(*598½)	600	22	38½	47½	30½	39	40½
Redland	360	26	31½	39½	15	21½	26½
(*372)	390	11	19	27	34	39	44
R-Royce	240	23½	30½	36	8	12	14½
(*256½)	260	11½	20	26	17	21½	24
Tesco	330	24½	31	36	8½	13	17
(*347)	360	8	16½	22	24½	29	32½
Williams	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	360	—	—	—	—	—	—

FTSE INDEX (*4416½)

	4300	4350	4400	4450	4500	4550
Calls						
Mar	118½	73½	38	15	4	1
Apr	145	108½	76	49½	30	15½
May	168½	136	104	78½	54½	39
Jun	200½	165½	132	106½	82	62
Dec	315	—	251½	—	202	—
Puts						
Mar	10½	21	37½	64	108	154
Apr	38½	52½	71	96½	127	164
May	61½	78½	96½	121½	148½	183
Jun	78½	95	113	138	164	195
Dec	145	—	182½	—	230	—

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
Abby Nat	750	34	57½	71	16	32½	42
(*782½)	800	10	34	47	45½	59½	68
Amstrad	140	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	160	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barclays	1100	42½	77½	93	19½	37	55
(*1116½)	1150	19½	51½	67½	46½	62	79½
Nat Pwr	500	20	40	38½	13	32	35½
(*505)	550	4½	19½	18½	46½	64	68½

Series		Apr	Jul	Oct	Apr	Jul	Oct
Glaxo W	1050	45½	71½	86½	22½	40½	55
(*1087)	1100	21	46½	62½	50½	66½	79½
HSBC	1500	122	161½	186½	15	47½	69½
(*1617)	1600	48½	104½	132½	52½	90	114
Reuter	600	50½	68	76½	8½	16½	22½
(*647)	650	18½	40	49½	29	36	44½
Royal & Sun	460	30½	40½	49½	8	17½	23½
(*488½)	500	7½	21½	30	30½	39	44½

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Blue Circ	390	30½	36½	43½	10½	15	20½
(*413½)	420	12½	21	28½	25½	30	35½
Kingfshr	650	47	58½	68	13½	22½	28½
(*686½)	700	20	32½	42½	39½	47	53

Series		Mar	Jun		Mar	Jun	
Br Gas	220	19½	24	—	1	9½	—
(*239)	240	5	12½	—	6	19	—

Series		Mar	Jun	Sep	Mar	Jun	Sep
Dixons	500	32½	51	59	1½	12½	21½
(*530½)	550	3½	23½	33	22	35	45½
EMI Group	1150	35½	79	102	10	39½	60
(*1172½)	1300	11½	54	77	35	63	84
Tarmac	100	4	7½	10½	1½	6	6½
(*102)	110	0½	3½	6½	8	12½	12½
Hillsdwn	180	13	16½	17½	0½	5½	7½
(*191½)	200	2	5½	7½	8½	17½	18½
Lonrho	140	8½	13½	16½	1	4½	6½
(*147½)	160	0½	5	7½	13	15	17½
Sears	90	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	100	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thorn EMI	1500	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	1600	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tomkins	280	7	19	24½	3	11	17½
(*283½)	300	0½	10	15	16½	22	28½
Lloyds TSB	500	19	40½	50½	3½	17	25
(*515)	550	1	17½	27½	35½	44½	51½
Scot Pwr	340	8	22½	28	5	13	20½
(*363½)	390	0½	9	15	26½	30½	39½
Unilever	1500	65½	89½	114½	3½	31	45
(*1559)	1600	9	30½	67½	44½	81½	96

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 97	111-25	112-04	111-19	111-31	8176
Previous open interest: 220718	Jun 97	111-11	111-22	110-26	111-16	93018
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 97	101.57	101.85	101.25	101.50	234352
Previous open interest: 243692	Sep 97	100.75	100.75	100.60	100.63	100
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Jun 97	127.20	128.10	127.00	127.60	60428
Previous open interest: 98137	Sep 97	127.27	127.60	127.10	127.52	727
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Jun 97	125.31	125.31	125.10	125.29	1709
	Sep 97				123.68	0
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 97	93.75	93.75	93.73	93.75	12306
	Jun 97	93.57	93.60	93.55	93.59	21589
Previous open interest: 529791	Sep 97	93.35	93.39	93.32	93.38	17656
Three Mth Euromark	Mar 97	96.74	96.75	96.73	96.73	21544
Previous open interest: 1280741	Apr 97	96.75	96.75	96.75	96.74	604
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 97	92.69	92.75	92.68	92.75	6224
Previous open interest: 284934	Jun 97	93.13	93.20	93.11	93.17	22802
Three Mth Euroyen	Jun 97	99.41	99.41	99.41	99.41	500
	Sep 97	99.31	99.31	99.31	99.31	3800
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 97	98.13	98.15	98.10	98.10	6572
Previous open interest: 106008	Jun 97	98.15	98.18	98.11	98.12	14077
Three Mth ECU	Mar 97	95.75	95.78	95.74	95.74	478
Previous open interest: 34562	Jun 97	95.78	95.80	95.75	95.77	1302
FTSE 100	Mar 97	4380.0	4404.0	4350.0	4401.0	11109
Previous open interest: 71512	Jun 97	4399.0	4422.0	4381.0	4421.0	976

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance Hse 6½

Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6½ Low 5[illegible] Week fixed: 6

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5[illegible]; 3 mth 5[illegible]. Sell: 2 mth 5[illegible]; 3 mth: 5[illegible].

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Overnight: open 5[illegible], close 6½.

Local Authority Deps:	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	5.30	n/a	5.45	5.60	5.86
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

TREASURY BILLS: Applcts: £1,863m allotted: £400m; Bids: £98.55% received: 51%: Last week: £98.56% received: 57%: Avge rate: £5.7980% last wk £5.7574%: Next week: £400m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5½-5½	5-4
Deutschemark:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
French Franc:	3½-3	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Swiss Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $352.40-352.90 **Close:** $349.20-349.70 **High:** $352.00-352.50 **Low:** $348.00-348.50 **AM:** $351.70 **PM:** $350.30

Krugerrand: $348.50-351.50 (£217.50-219.50)

Platinum: $381.75 (£237.75) **Silver:** $5.19 (£3.235) **Palladium:** $148.75 (£92.50)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 7	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.1034-3.1082	3.1049-3.1077	[illegible]	[illegible]
Brussels	56.770-56.940	56.851-56.896	16-11pr	42-36pr
Copenhagen	10.492-10.522	10.505-10.517	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dublin	1.0308-1.0349	1.0314-1.0327	5-1pr	15-8pr
Frankfurt	2.7519-2.7599	2.7568-2.7597	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lisbon	275.99-276.72	276.38-276.72	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madrid	233.03-233.65	233.31-233.50	0.06pr-0.04ds	22-4pr
Milan	2726.3-2735.1	2730.9-2733.6	25-30ds	71-93ds
Montreal	2.1892-2.1998	2.1939-2.1961	0.59-0.53pr	1.18-1.09pr
New York	1.6042-1.6074	1.6042-1.6052	0.075-0.775pr	0.258-0.237pr
Oslo	11.103-11.139	11.129-11.139	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paris	9.2800-9.3060	9.2907-9.3013	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	12.274-12.366	12.336-12.356	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	194.38-195.80	195.56-195.80	[illegible]	[illegible]
Vienna	19.365-19.422	19.400-19.422	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.3744-2.3845	2.3814-2.3845	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel *Premium - pr. Discount - ds.*

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.2663-1.2691
Austria	12.05-12.09
Belgium (Com)	35.43-35.44
Canada	1.3667-1.3692
Denmark	6.5460-6.5490
France	5.7910-5.7930
Germany	1.7174-1.7179
Hong Kong	7.7420-7.7430
Ireland	1.5565-1.5575
Italy	1702.70-1703.20
Japan	121.56-121.96
Malaysia	2.4810-2.4820
Netherlands	1.9347-1.9352
Norway	6.9220-6.9299
Portugal	172.16-172.26
Singapore	1.4330-1.4340
Spain	145.50-145.60
Sweden	7.6840-7.6915
Switzerland	1.4837-1.4842

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6055-1.6082
Australia dollar	2.0333-2.0360
Bahrain dinar	0.6005-0.6125
Brazil real*	1.6836-1.6880
China yuan	13.183-13.483
Cyprus pound	0.8170-0.8270
Finland markka	8.1825-8.2485
Greece drachma	430.0-437.0
Hong Kong dollar	12.4275-12.4376
India rupee	57.29-58.25
Indonesia rupiah	3819.0-3887.6
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4835-0.4935
Malaysia ringgit	3.9825-3.9868
New Zealand dollar	2.2775-2.2807
Pakistan rupee	64.00 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7950-5.9190
Singapore dollar	2.3007-2.3037
S Africa rand (com)	7.1240-7.2260
U A E dirham	5.8450-5.9690

Barclays Bank GTS * *Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3I	1,400	Land Secs	527
ASDA Gp	36,700	Legal & Gn	3,500
Abbey Ntl	19,200	Lloyds TSB	11,700
Allied Dom	1,500	LucasVarity	3,900
Argos	218	Marks Spr	3,100
AB Foods	194	Mercury Asset	511
BAA	1,200	NatWst Bk	3,800
BAT Inds	5,000	Nat Grid	3,700
BG	11,700	Nat Power	1,600
BOC	726	Next	827
BP	4,100	Orange	443
BSkyB	6,200	P & O	2,400
BTR	34,100	Pearson	854
BT	13,600	PowerGen	327
Bk of Scot	1,300	Prudential	6,000
Barclays	5,900	RMC	321
Bass	3,200	RTZ	1,600
Blue Circle	2,100	Railtrack	6,200
Boots	990	Rank Group	8,000
BAe	952	Reckitt Col	2,300
BA	2,500	Reed Intl	1,100
Brit Steel	6,300	Rentokil	1,400
Burmah Cstl	1,200	Reuters	6,400
Burton	5,900	Rolls Royce	4,700
Cable Wire	2,000	Royal & Sun	3,100
Cadbury	4,700	Royal Bk Scl	3,500
Carlton Cms	4,000	Safeway	2,000
Centrica	22,900	Sainsbury	3,100
Cm Union	15,300	Schroders	358
Dixons	1,200	Scot & New	818
EMI	446	Scot Power	2,000
Energy Grp	4,000	Svrn Trent	753
Enterpr Oil	2,500	Shell Trans	3,000
GKN	5,200	Siebe	1,500
GRE	3,100	SmKl Bch	2,800
GUS	772	Smith Nph	1,000
Gen Acc	549	Smiths Inds	282
Gen Elec	5,500	Std Chartd	2,100
Glaxo Well	13,000	TI Gp	924
Granada	3,000	Tate & Lyle	1,200
Grand Met	4,400	Tesco	8,000
Guinness	5,200	Thames W	711
HSBC	4,800	Tomkins	3,400
Hanson	4,400	Unilever	1,600
Hays	355	Utd Utilities	1,100
ICI	1,900	Utd News	728
Imp Tob	1,500	Vodafone	14,500
Kingfisher	2,500	Whitbread	409
LASMO	1,200	Wolseley	301
Ladbroke	7,000	Zeneca	1,500

WALL STREET

	Mar 7 midday	Mar 6 close
AMP Inc	38½	38½
AMR Corp	83½	82½
ASA	36	36½
AT & T	36½	36½
Abbott Labs	56½	57½
Advanced Micro	38½	37½
Aetna Life	86½	85½
Ahmanson (HF)	41	40½
Air Prod & Chem	74	74
AirTouch Comm	26½	26½
Alberto-Culver B	29½	29½
Albertson's	35	35½
Alcan Alumnm	36	36½
Allied Signal	72½	72
Alum Co of Am	72½	71½
Amax Gold Inc	7½	7½
Amerada Hess	53½	53½
Amer Brands	53½	53½
Amer El Power	41½	41½
Amer Express	66½	65½
Amer Genl Corp	43½	43½
Amer Home Pr	66½	65
Amer Intl	122½	122½
Amer Stores	44½	45
Amer Standard	45½	45
Ameritech	60½	60
Amoco	87½	87½
Anheuser-Busch	44	44
Apple Computer	16½	16½
Archer Daniels	18½	18½
Armco	7½	7½
Armstrng Wrld	71	70½
Asarco	30	29½
Atl Richfield	126½	126½
Auto Data Pro	44½	44½
Avery Dennison	41	40½
Avon Products	60½	60½
Baker Hughes	38½	38
Baltim Gas & El	26½	26½
Banc One	47½	46½
BankAmerica	120½	118½
Bank of NY	41½	40½
Bankers Tr NY	94½	93
Barnett Banks	46½	46½
Bausch & Lomb	37½	37½
Baxter Intl	47½	46½
Bectn Dicknsn	49	48½
Bell Atlantic	66½	66½
Bell Industries	22	22½
BellSouth	44½	44½
Black & Decker	31½	31½
Block (H&R)	30½	30½
Boeing	105½	104½
Boise Cascade	33½	33½
Bristol Myrs Sq	67	66½
Browning Ferris	31½	31½
Brunswick	28½	28½
Burlington Nthn	85½	85½
CMS Energy Corp	32½	32½
CNA Financial	111	111½
CPC Intl	85	85
CSX	50½	50½
Campbell Soup	91½	91½
Can Pacific	26½	26
Carolina Pwr	37½	37½
Caterpillar	81	80½
Central & SW	23½	23½
Champion Intl	44½	43½
Chase Manhat	104½	102½
Chevron Corp	66½	66½
Chrysler	32½	31½
Chubb Corp	60½	60½
Ciena Corp	153½	150
Citicorp	124½	122½
Clorox	120½	119½
Coastal Corp	47½	47
Coca Cola	60½	60½
Coca Cola Ent	62½	63
Colgate-Palm	111½	109½
Columbia Gas	61½	60
ColumbiaHCA	41½	41
Compaq Comp	79½	77½
Comp Ass Intl	42	40½
Conagra	53½	51½
Conrail	112½	112½
Cons Edison	30½	30½
Cons Nat Gas	52½	52
Cooper Inds	45½	45½
CoreStates	54	53½
Corning Inc	38½	38½
Crown Cork	55	55½
Dana Corp	31½	31½
Dayton Hudson	42	41½
Deere	44	42½
Delta Air Lines	84½	83½
Deluxe Corp	32	31½
Digital Equip	32½	32½
Dillard Dept St	30½	30½
Disney (Walt)	76½	75½
Dominion Res	40½	40½
Donnelley (RR)	36½	36½
Dover Corp	50½	50½
Dow Chemical	81	81
Dow Jones	45½	45½
Dresser	31½	31½
Duke Power	44½	44½
Dun & Bradstreet	25	24½
Du Pont	112½	111½
Eastman Chem	56½	56
Eastman Kodak	86½	86½

	Mar 7 midday	Mar 6 close
Eaton Corp	72½	72½
Edison Intl	21	21½
Elect Data Sys	45	45½
Emerson Elec	102½	101½
Engelhard Corp	21½	21½
Enron Corp	40½	40½
Entergy	26½	26½
Ethyl Corp	9½	9½
Exxon	101½	101½
FMC Corp	67½	67½
FPL Group	45½	45
Federal Express	54½	55½
First Bk Sys	82½	81
First Union Rlty	12½	12½
Fleet Finl Grp	62½	61½
Fluor Corp	62½	61½
Ford Motor	32	31½
GTE Corp	46½	45½
Gannett	90½	90½
Gap Inc Del	33½	33½
Gencorp	19½	19½
Gen Dynamics	67½	66½
Gen Electric	105	104½
Gen Mills	64½	64½
Gen Motors	56½	56
Gen Reinsurance	172½	171½
Gen Signal	43½	43½
Genuine Parts	47½	47½
Georgia Pac	77½	76½
Gillette	81½	80½
Glaxo Welle ADR	34	33½
Goodrich (BF)	41	40½
Goodyear Tire	52½	52½
Grt Atl Pac Tea	31½	30½
Great Wstn Fin	40½	40½
Halliburton	67	67½
Harcourt General	48½	48½
Heinz (HJ)	43½	43½
Hercules	45½	45½
Hershey Foods	45½	45½
Hewlett Packard	56½	57½
Hilton Hotels	26½	25½
Home Depot	56½	56
Homestake Mng	15½	15½
Honeywell	74½	74½
Household Intl	100½	99½
Houston Inds	22½	22½
Humana	22½	20½
ITT Corp	58½	57½
Ikon Office	40	39½
Illinois Tool	80½	80
Illinova	24½	24½
INCO	35½	35½
Ingersoll Rand	47½	47½
Inland Steel	19	18½
Intel Corp	140½	145½
IBM	147½	140½
Intl Flav & Fr	40½	40½
Intl Paper	42½	42
James River Va	34	34½
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	59½	59½
Kellogg	68½	68
Kerr-McGee	64½	63½
Kimberly-Clark	106½	106½
Kmart	12½	12½
Knight-Ridder	39½	39½
Lilly (Eli)	86½	86½
Limited Inc	19	19½
Lincoln Nat	58½	58½
Litton	42½	42½
Liz Claiborne	43½	43½
Lockheed Martin	87	86½
Louisiana Pac	21	21
MCI Comm	35½	35½
Manpower Inc	30½	30½
Marriott Int	51½	51½
Marsh & McLnn	120½	119½
Masco Corp	36	36
May Dept St	46	46½
Maytag Corp	22½	22½
McDonalds	44½	44½
McDonnell D	65½	65½
McGraw Hill	52½	52½
Mead Corp	57½	57½
Medtronic	64	65½
Mellon Bk	84½	83
Merck Inc	92½	92½
Merrill Lynch	90½	87½
Microsoft	98	97½
Minnesota Mine	91½	89½
Mobil Corp	131½	130½
Monsanto	38	37½
Morgan (JP)	106½	107½
Motorola Inc	59½	58½
Natl Semi	30	30½
Natl Service Ind	38½	38½
Navistar Intl	9½	9½
NY Times A	44½	44½
Newmont Mng	45½	46½
Niag Mohawk	10½	10½
Nike B	71½	71½
NL Industries	11½	11½
Noram Energy	15½	15½
Nordstrom	38	37½
Norfolk Sthrn	90½	90½
Nthn State Pwr	47	46½
Norwest Corp	51½	51½
Nynex Corp	50	49½
Occidental Pet	25½	25½
Ohio Edison	22	22

	Mar 7 midday	Mar 6 close
Oracle	37½	36½
Oryx Energy Co	20½	20½
Overseas Ship	17½	17½
Owens Corning	42½	41½
PHH Corp	47½	47½
PPG Industries	56½	56½
PNC Bank	43½	43½
PP&L Res	22½	22½
Paccar Inc	74	73½
Pacificorp	20½	20½
Pac Enterprises	31	31
Pac Telesis	40½	40½
Pall Corp	21½	22½
Parker Hannifin	44½	44½
Peco Energy	21½	21½
Penney (JC)	49	49½
Pennzoil	57½	57
Pepsico	31½	32½
Pfizer	93½	92½
Pharm & Upjhn	38½	38½
Phelps Dodge	73½	72½
Philip Morris	134½	133½
Phillips Pet	41½	41½
Pitney Bowes	62½	62½
Polaroid	42½	41½
Procter & Gmbl	119½	119
Providian	58½	58½
Pub Serv E & G	27½	27½
Quaker Oats	36½	36½
Ralston Purina	85½	84½
Raychem Corp	87½	87½
Raytheon	47½	47
Reebok Intl	44½	44
Reynolds Metals	62½	61½
Rockwell Intl	66½	65½
Rohm & Haas	94½	93½
Royal Dutch	176½	176
Rubbermaid	23½	23½
SBC Comms	57	57
Safeco Corp	40½	40½
St Paul's Cos	69½	69½
Salomon Inc	58	57½
Sara Lee Corp	40	39½
Schering Plough	79½	79½
Schlumberger	105½	105½
Seagram	39½	39½
Sears Roebuck	55	54½
Shell Trans	104½	103½
Sherwin Wllms	56	56
Skyline Corp	23½	23½
Snap-On-Tools	40½	40½
Southern Co	21½	21½
Sprint Corp	45	45½
Stanley Works	39½	39½
Sun Company	27½	27½
Sun Microsys	30½	30½
Suntrust	53½	52½
Supervalu	31	30½
Sysco Corp	34½	34½
TRW Inc	54½	54
TCC Inds	1½	1½
Tandem Comp	13	12½
Tandy Corp	53½	53½
Temple Inland	56½	54½
Tenneco	40½	39½
Texaco	103½	103½
Texas Inst	84	80½
Texas Utilities	39½	38½
Textron	103½	102½
Time Warner	43½	43½
Times-Mirror A	54½	53½
Timken	53½	53½
Torchmark	59½	58½
Toys R Us	28½	27½
Transamerica	87½	87½
Travelers	55½	54½
Tribune	40	39½
Tyco Intl	59½	59½
UST Inc	31½	31
UAL	65½	64½
US Inds	37½	36½
US West Comm	35½	34½
US West Media	18½	19
USAirways Group	22½	21½
USX Marathon	22½	27½
Unicom	22½	22½
Unilever NV	184	182½
Union Camp	48½	48½
Union Carbide	47½	47½
Union Pacific	62	62½
Unisys Corp	6½	6½
USF&G Corp	22	21½
US Life	47½	47½
United Tech	76½	76½
Unocal Corp	39½	39½
VF Corp	66½	65½
WMX Tech	32½	32½
Wal-Mart Stores	27½	27½
Warner-Lambert	83½	83½
Wells Fargo	316½	312½
Westinghouse El	19½	18½
Weyerhaeuser	47½	47½
Whirlpool	49½	49½
Whitman	23½	23½
Winn Dixie	32½	32½
Woolworth	21½	21½
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	60½	60½
Xerox	61½	61½
Yellow Corp	16½	16½

هكذا من الاصل

IN SHAPE 30

Some medical insurers want healthy clients

WEEKEND

MONEY

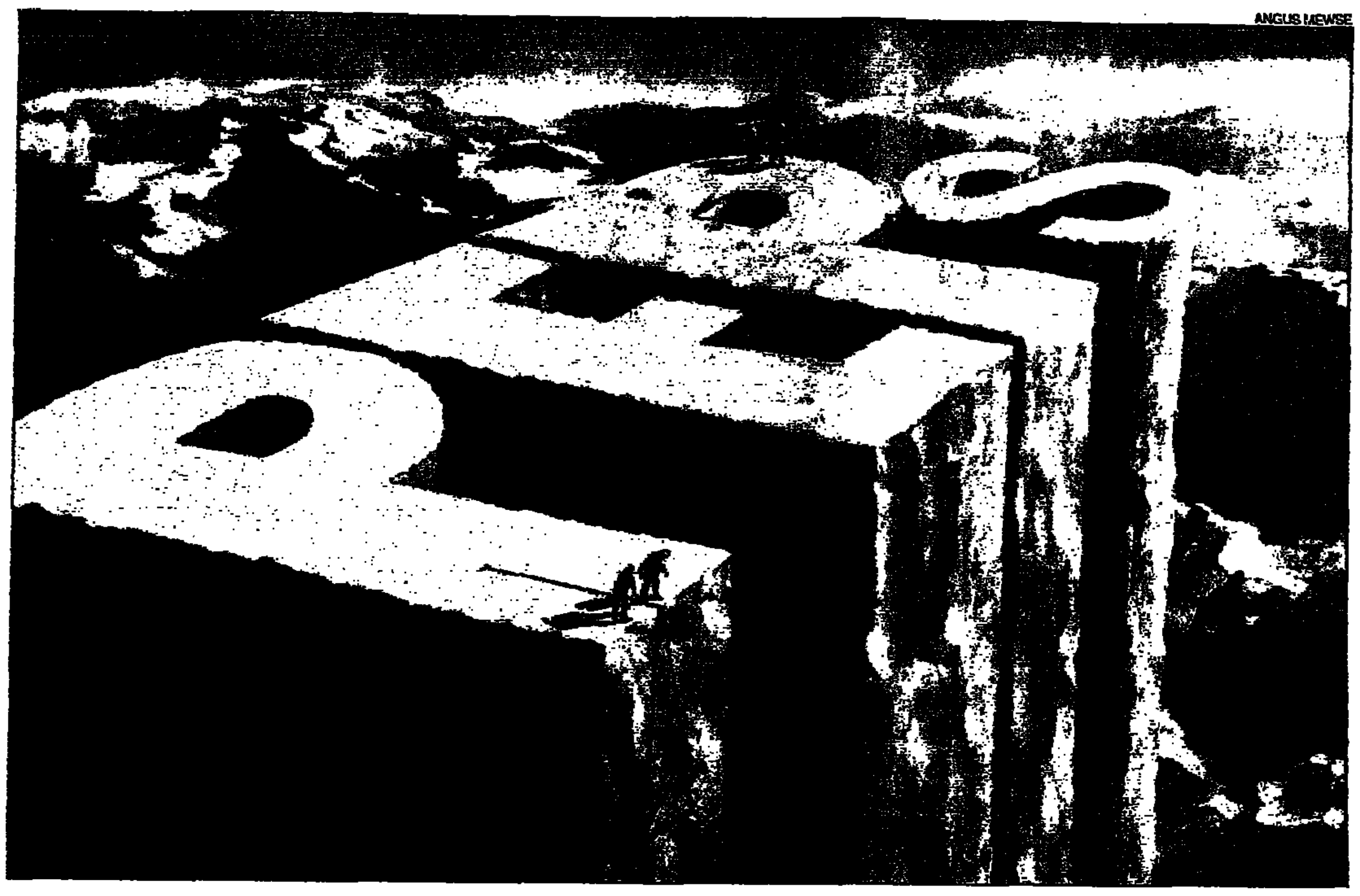
IN THE MOVIES 34

How to invest and play a part in films

TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Caroline Merrell and **Anne Ashworth** provide a guide for last-minute Pep buyers

How to scale Pep heights



ANGUS MEWSE

In a recent survey, 7 per cent of those questioned said they thought a Pep was an indigestion tablet, while another 2 per cent believed it was a brand of sports drink or a species of tropical fish. These individuals are unlikely to join the rush now beginning to use personal equity plan allowances before the end of the tax year.

Sales of Peps have been slowing. Figures from the Association of Unit Trust and Investment Funds (Autif) show that the public appetite for Peps may be waning. It seems that the closeness of the general election and the record highs now being seen in the UK stock market have made many wary of investing.

Although the Labour Party has denied it has any intention of abolishing Peps and has made it clear that it will not remove higher-rate tax relief, it remains possible that a lifetime limit will be imposed on Pep holdings, limiting the overall amount of tax relief that any individual can receive.

But, in spite of such immediate concerns, thousands who take a longer-term view will still wish to exploit their Pep allowances. Under the Inland Revenue rules, you can invest £6,000 in a general Pep and a further £3,000 in a single-company Pep in each tax year. The income paid out from the Pep and any rise in its value will be free from both income and capital gains tax.

■ **Where do I get a Pep?** It is arguable that there is just too much consumer choice in this market. Every imaginable type of financial services company can now sell you a Pep, including banks, building societies, financial advisers, insurance companies and soon, the supermarket chains. The vast majority of these providers offer general Peps based on unit and investment trusts, simple to understand off-the-shelf products. Some of these plans will aim for capital growth, others for income. Most Pep providers also make it possible for customers to diversify outside the UK by offering Pep packages with an international element. The Revenue permits you to invest up to £1,500 outside the UK and the European Union.

For those whose primary requirement is income, corporate bond Peps offer an annual income, but little prospect of capital growth. Warnings have, however, been sounded about this type of plan. Robert Higginbotham, head of savings and investments at the Prudential, said this week: "Last year it was easy to deliver yields of 8 or 9 per cent far outstripping the yields on offer from the building societies. But in 1997 savings rates are creeping up and our concern is that corporate-bond Pep managers will look to increasingly risky portfolios to maintain their competitiveness." The message is: carefully check the composition of any corporate bond Pep before investing.

■ **How much do Peps cost?** The uninitiated can be surprised by the admission costs charged by Pep providers. The initial charge, deducted at the outset from your investment, can be as high as 6 per cent, while the typical annual charge is 1.75 per cent. Some companies have introduced exit fees as a substitute for the initial charge. These work on a reducing scale basis, decreasing from 5 per cent if you sell in the first year down to zero. Some providers have no initial charge and only a 0.5 per cent annual charge. The casual investor may wonder why there is such a big discrepancy. The argument is that the high costs pay for fund managers actively to manage the money. Unfortunately, many take the money and then fail to produce good returns.

Investors should try before investing to get some background information about the past performance of the particular fund. The cheaper Peps tend to be those that are based on index tracking — funds that just follow the movements in the UK stock market. Virgin, Norwich Union, Legal & General and HSBC are among the companies that offer these types of funds.

■ **Can I get a discount on a Pep?** The Pep discount houses should be able to arrange for you to buy your Pep at a lower cost, by rebating to you some of the commission paid to middlemen by Pep providers.

Among those offering discounts are Elson (0500 691790) Pep Discount (0500 498477), City Deal (01708 775214) and Chelsea Financial Services (0171-351 6022). Chelsea says it can offer a discount of as much as 100 per cent. This means you should get back an amount equivalent to 3-5 per cent of your investment.

■ **I have a portfolio of Peps built up over several years, which means I have a big exposure to the UK market — is there anything I can do?** If you are concerned that the UK market is set for a downturn, you should, in theory, be able to transfer each yearly Pep allowance to another Pep. For instance, if you invested the full £6,000 in a Pep last year, and it had grown to £6,200 you should be able to transfer this amount to another company's Pep and be able, at the same time, to invest your full 1996-97 allowance. Unfortunately, the administration systems at some Pep providers are making this very difficult.

According to Sheila Brickell, an analyst with Allenbridge, the Pep research house, some companies will separate out amounts invested in different tax years, while others will bundle all the amounts together. She sees this last practice as an underhand method for these companies to ensure that they keep the money under management.

She said: "We get a lot of questions about this. — Many people are annoyed at the attitude of the companies." She advised those planning to buy a Pep to make sure the fund manager has a big range of funds that would allow a switch, or offered "unbundled" Peps. Those who invest in a Pep via a savings plan will almost certainly not be able to transfer to another manager.

■ **What is the last day that I can invest in a Pep?** The end of the tax year, April 5, is a Saturday this year. However, many companies say that they will accept cheques right up to the last moment.

■ **Which Pep should I choose?** The simplest option is to ask the experts who spend all year examining the performance of Peps from every angle and the competence of the fund managers employed by Pep providers.

Allenbridge (0171 409 1111) recommends Peps from Credit Suisse, Pembroke, Schroders and Gartmore. Jason Holland, Best Investment (0171 321 0100) said: "For growth We recommend Perpetual, half in the growth fund, 25 per cent in the UK smaller companies fund and 25 per cent in the Asian smaller companies fund. We also recommend Gartmore for growth — a mixture of the European Selective Opportunities Fund, UK smaller companies, Pacific growth and American emerging." For income, he recommends Guinness Flight and Jupiter.

Braced for tax relief blow

Higher-rate tax relief on pensions could be one of the immediate casualties of the arrival of a Labour government. At the moment, those who pay 40 per cent tax benefit from the equivalent amount of tax relief on their pension contributions. Some in the industry believe that this level of tax relief could be scrapped, leaving higher-rate taxpayers to benefit from relief at the basic rate of income tax.

If the current Government is re-elected, then the proposals scrapping tax relief on all pensions contributions for those in their early twenties and those about to start work could be introduced.

Independent financial advisers are urging their customers to ensure they make the maximum contributions possible to their personal pensions before the end of the tax year, April 5, and ahead of a general election, thereby ensuring the maximum amount of tax relief.

Policyholders can pay between 17.5 per cent and 40 per cent of their income into a personal pension, according to age. The older they are, the more they can contribute. Those in company pensions can contribute up to 15 per cent of their earnings per year.

Jonathan Gumpel, an adviser with Brookes Macdonald Gayer, said: "One of the most important things to remember about pensions is that most people simply do not contribute anywhere near enough into their schemes to ensure the maximum pension can be obtained."

Mr Gumpel also pointed out that the six million or so with personal pensions can benefit from the carry-forward or carry-back provisions. Under the carry-back provisions, policyholders can choose to have their pension contributions set against the previous year's tax allowance. This would help someone moving from a higher rate to a lower rate tax bracket. Those with personal pensions also benefit from the carry-forward provisions, which means that any unused contribution entitlement can be carried forward for six years.

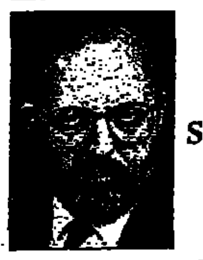
Those coming up to the end of the tax year, who have not invested the maximum amount in their pension, should consult an independent financial adviser to find out how much they should contribute. *Money Management*, the monthly magazine, publishes a list of fee-based financial advisers by geographical area. It can be obtained by telephoning 01179 769444.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Pensions pyramid crumbles, page 35

The soufflé syndrome

PERSONAL INVESTOR



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

The long path of rising share prices is littered with bears trampled into rugs by the advancing herds of bulls. PDFM, most cautious of the big fund management houses, has lost business relative to its rivals by underperforming two years running. This week, the main share indices in London, Paris and Frankfurt all climbed into new, higher ground. Aside from this being a natural progression, there seemed good reason for London and continental markets to move ahead. Why then are big mainstream investors, who have long fuelled the boom, now anxious about the stock market?

Don't be fooled by German dole queues. Economic recovery is picking up again on the Continent, albeit squeezed by attempts to meet the tests for monetary union. Thanks to that squeeze, mark zone currencies are weak, inflation is dormant and interest rates more likely to fall than to rise. That combination should be good for asset prices, if not for people.

In London, short-term interest rates are rising gently, which reinforces those nervous enough to keep their cash. But long-term interest rates are falling and they are ultimately more important for share prices. Over the past year, yields on typical 15-year government gilt-edged stocks have fallen from about 8.3 per cent to 7.5 per cent. Low inflation is becoming credible. From the start of January, yields fell from about 7.8 to 7.25 per cent in mid-February before tweaking up again. A healthy gilt-edged market augurs a healthy share market, except in recession. Britain is enjoying its sixth straight year of economic expansion. The growth rate is still picking up a little.

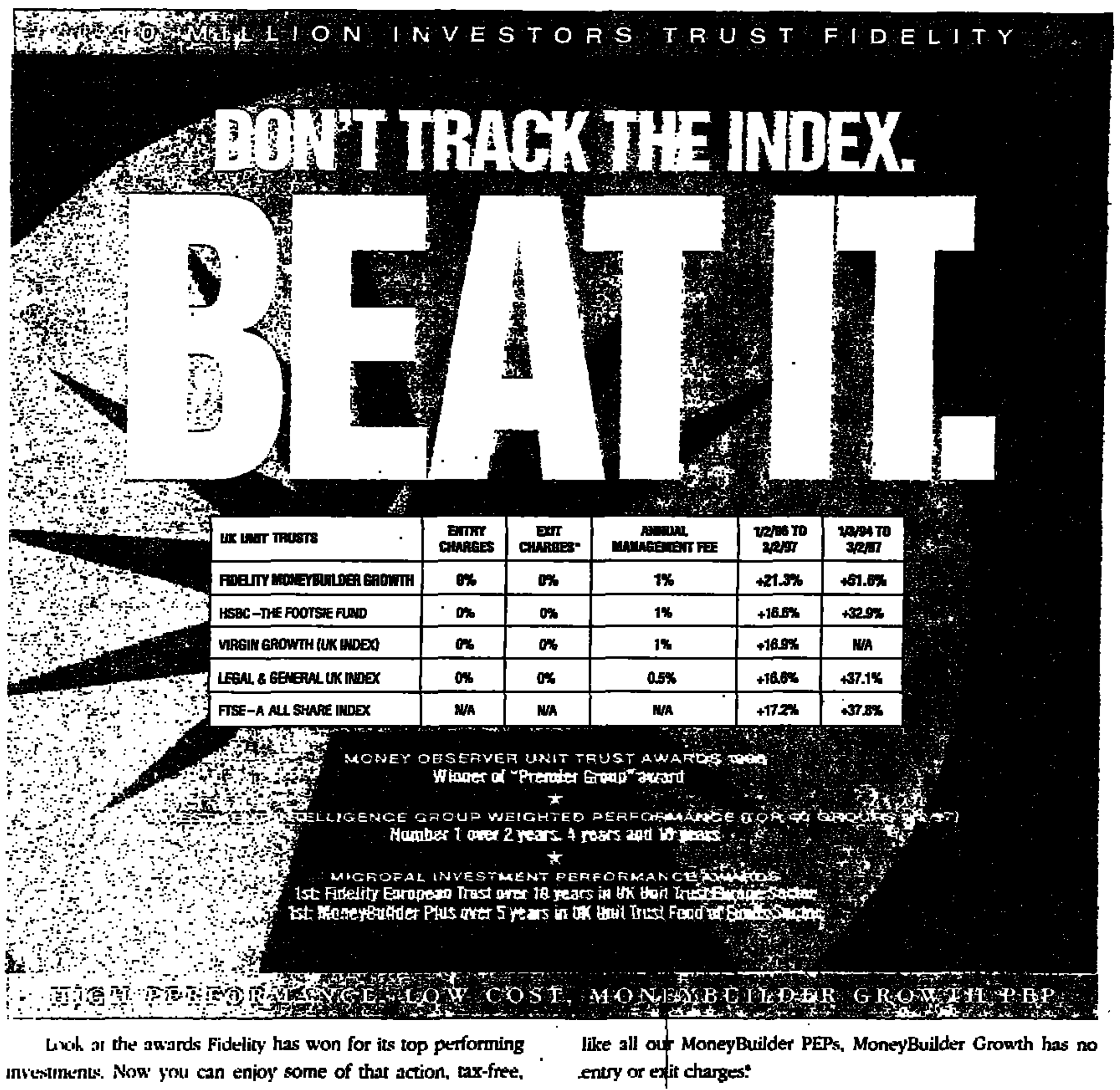
Institutional investors ought to be more worried than they are about Labour's unspoken plans for dividend tax and their possible impact on value. Although the economic background is otherwise benign, they might feel the impact of sterling's rise on profits has been ignored; that a 4 per cent rise in share prices in two months has set an unsustainable ace; that stock prices have run a bit too far ahead of events, so that the All-Share index sells at more than 18 times earnings and the average dividend yield is little more than 3.5 per cent. There is enough hot air in share prices to ensure that bad bits of news, profits warnings or missed forecasts send individual stocks plunging like a punctured balloon. This soufflé syndrome would certainly suggest a pause 5 per cent above today's level.

Such reasoned factors are not, however, what causes anxiety among the big players. They are worried about Wall Street. Starting from ratings as high as London's are today, New York share prices have jumped a quarter in nine months. Now it is having one of its little setbacks, edging down a net 1 per cent.

Why need this affect Europe in the absence of basic factors such as changing interest rates? After all, Japanese share prices are down 10 per cent year on year and less than half their 1989 peak. But that does not blight Hong Kong, let alone London or Frankfurt.

This is where the fear comes in. Wall Street's boom was fuelled fundamentally by retirement funds. But people are asking who has been blowing in all this extra hot air. Fingers point at speculative hedge funds, borrowed to the hilt in yen loans costing next to nothing, and therefore riding free on any increase in stock prices, however vertiginous. Even modest extra gains, multiplied by their loan gearing, will yield good returns — until, that is, the process goes into reverse and the soufflé sinks.

No one knows if or when that will happen. When it does, however, contagion is reckoned to be inevitable because US investors will pull in the profitable investments they have made in other markets, particularly Europe. Those who have to decide when to cash a pension might opt for caution. Most private investors can afford to leave such short-term worries to professionals: even a severe dent is unlikely to last much more than a year against a basically healthy background. Better to worry about those Labour levies.



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HSBC – THE FOOTSIE FUND	0%	0%	1%	+16.6%	+32.9%
VIRGIN GROWTH (UK INDEX)	0%	0%	1%	+16.9%	N/A
LEGAL & GENERAL UK INDEX	0%	0%	0.5%	+16.6%	+37.1%
FTSE – A ALL SHARE INDEX	N/A	N/A	N/A	+17.2%	+37.6%

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Helen Pridham says the public is become immune to the benefits of health cover

Medical insurers seek cold cure

MARK BOURDILLON

Shaping up: some policies will accept you only if you can prove you have a "demonstrably healthy lifestyle".

In spite of growing public concern about the NHS, fewer people have been signing up for private medical insurance during recent years. According to the Association of British Insurers, the number of people with this type of insurance fell by 25 per cent between 1990 and 1995 — from 7.6 million to 5.7 million.

Now a number of new schemes have been launched which insurers hope will reverse the trend. The answers that providers have come up with in order to attract new customers and tempt old ones back to private medical insurance could not be more different. One of the most controversial plans has been brought out by Western Provident Association (WPA). It offers lower premiums in return for policyholders agreeing to pay the first part of their medical costs themselves.

Guardian Direct, on the other hand, has come up with a scheme that virtually guarantees you receive part of your premiums back each year, while Prime Health has gone for a no-frills approach. WPA's new 2-4-1 policy offers substantial premium reductions to customers if they are prepared to pay the first £1,000; £2,000 or £4,000 of their private medical bills during any one year. Couples who take out the policy will both have to pay the chosen excess and if they have any children a £250 excess will also be applied.

In spite of these hefty contributions to costs, you will be accepted only if you can prove that you are living a "demonstrably healthy lifestyle". You will be asked questions about your height, weight, smoking and drinking habits, and the level of exercise you take. This will be checked each year and WPA reserves the right not to renew your policy if you have fallen badly by the wayside. But independent advisers are sceptical about WPA's new product.

George Connelly of Healthcare Matters, a Dorset adviser, said: "I welcome innovation but I honestly question the willingness of people to pay such high excesses. Other policies already offer excesses on a smaller scale and although some people like the idea initially, they often get frustrated because it cuts down on how often they can claim. Not being able to claim on a policy is a major reason for lapses." For those who are interested, however. Mr Connelly points out that the other insurers which offer the option of less onerous excesses also charge more competitive premiums without "cherry-picking" the very healthy. "Take a single person aged 35 living in London. Under a WPA plan with a £2,000 excess, the annual premium would be £494.95. Compare that to a OHRA Medios policy for London with an excess of just £324 on which the premium would be £415.02 or to a Prime Health Primecare policy with a £250 excess and a 25 per cent no claims discount which would cost £389.43. Both policies offer benefits which compare reasonably and are renewable regardless of health."

The lack of certainty about what consumers actually want is shown by the fact that Guardian Direct. in launching its new private medical insurance product last week. has adopted a completely opposite approach to WPA. GD, which until now has sold mainly car and household insurance over the phone, has launched a policy which aims to ensure that small claims can be made frequently in order to create customer loyalty. It will pay out up to £30 per person per policy year for dental and optical check-ups and £12 per person per year for prescription charges. New policyholders will also be covered for existing ailments or complaints suffered in the past five years as soon as a fixed two-year period is up — even if the complaint recurred during time and they received treatment for it. Normally such moratoriums stipulate no follow-up treatment during the waiting period.

A choice of two levels of cover is available under Guardian's scheme, one which pays outpatient costs — the Standard Plan — and one which does not — the Value Plan. Full refunds of the cost of treatment are provided under each scheme. Unlike many other low-cost schemes, the number of hospitals where treatment can be obtained is reasonably large with more than 500 on the list. Guardian's plan is similar to a scheme launched last year by Legal & General that also provides cash contributions towards the cost of dental and optical treatment and alternative medicine.

Legal & General has just added an outpatient cover option to its plan. Cash benefits may be attractive but Stephen Walker, of Medical Insurance Services of Brighton, thinks insurers should approach the matter of customer loyalty differently. He said: "I believe the best way to retain customers is to keep the premiums down, particularly in later life." Lower premiums have been achieved by Prime Health by cutting back the comprehensive cover offered under its main Primecare plan with a new Saver and Supersaver plan.

The "frills" it has removed include cover for psychiatric and mental conditions, alternative medicine, home nursing, complications of pregnancy and oral surgery. In addition, the Supersaver plan excludes all outpatient treatment which precedes inpatient or day care treatment.

Payout solid from the Rock

SOCIETY WATCH

The average share payout by the Northern Rock Building Society, the smallest of those planning to convert into a bank, could be as high a £1,400. This sum has been boosted by the soaring stock market, and recent rises in the share price of the Abbey National, the most comparable share.

This week, the Northern Rock unveiled plans for its £1.2 billion flotation, scheduled for October. Around 900,000 members will benefit from an equal distribution of 500 free shares with an estimated price per share of between 260p and 295p — if the society had floated on February 7.

Those who qualify for the free shares will be those investors who had £100 in their account on December 31 last year and who had a credit balance on the voting date. They must also have had £50 in their accounts on April 2. Qualifying borrowers will be those who have £100 worth of mortgage debt on December 31 last year and on the voting date. Investing members who are not entitled to vote may be entitled to receive a statutory cash bonus that will be a percentage of the total balance in the share accounts. This is expected to be around 8.8 per cent.

In announcing the deal, the Northern Rock attempted at the same time to tackle the controversy surrounding the disabled. Under the terms of the other building society flotations, many disabled savers have been locked out of payouts because their accounts are looked after by trustees — only the first named on accounts benefit. Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, is in the process of bringing in a Bill to ensure that the disabled benefit from building society payouts.

The Northern Rock intends to make a donation of £1 million to charities for the disabled and their carers. The move has been broadly welcomed by Mr French.

The Northern Rock decided to go for an equal distributions of shares, as predicted in *The Times*, rather than a variable distribution because it claims that eight out of ten of its members would be better off. In offering an equal distribution of shares, the Northern Rock is following the Alliance & Leicester model, rather than the variable distribution offered by the Woolwich and the Halifax.

Members will be asked to vote at the special general meeting in Newcastle Arena on April 15. Postal votes should be returned by midnight on April 2. The Northern Rock is also setting up a charitable foundation, called the Northern Rock Foundation, that will help projects in the North East.

After flotation, the society will pay 5 per cent of its profits annually into the foundation, equivalent to £8 million last year.

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هكذا من الأصل

Season opens for watchdog trials

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

Nine years ago the Securities and Investments Board (SIB) assumed the task of protecting the nation's savings. Its actions over the next few weeks will prove whether the City watchdog is fit to carry out this vital duty for the rest of the century and beyond.

This week the formidable Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, informed Sir Andrew Large, the SIB's chief executive, that she expected a quick resolution to the personal pension scandal.

The SIB's conduct in this affair so far has revealed its most serious flaws. The organisation stood by while hundreds of thousands of employees were encouraged by life insurance salesmen to leave company schemes with good benefits for inferior personal pension plans.

Once the abuses came to light, the SIB failed to investigate the affair swiftly. It has also failed to ensure that all victims of the scandal received prompt compensation for loss and misleading advice. The SIB's performance has been shameful, giving every excuse for the insurance companies to delay payments. The watchdog has been expert at passing the buck, rather than taking the blame. The result is that about £50 million is all that has been offered in compensation from an estimated bill of £4 billion.

Before the end of the month, Sir Andrew must be able to show that the worst culprits among the insurers are closer to meeting their compensation liabilities.

Those awaiting a payout may have grounds for optimism about these discussions. Both sides have an impetus to end the delays. Sir Andrew is already due to stand down from his post in May. He will not wish to leave in an atmosphere of opprobrium.

The insurance companies, meanwhile, will be driven by the only force they understand: the potential for new business. Under the Government's proposals to reform the state pension scheme, a selected number of companies will be entitled to invest the compulsory contributions of the next generation of workers (see page 36).

Since no insurance company will wish to be excluded from this list, they will be eager to present themselves as models of propriety and customer care. The same commercial pressures that caused the pensions debacle could hasten its resolution. But the doubts will remain over the SIB's fitness for its role.

Small comfort

NATIONAL SAVINGS has heeded the requests of *Weekend Money* readers for more smaller-value Premium Bond prizes (see page 33). But for small holders, Ernie's odds remain deplorable.

BARRY BATCHELOR

Second-hand rose: the market for second-hand clothes has never been stronger thanks to Swampy and friends, like that for second-hand policies

Tep specialists enjoy boom time

Continued speculation over which insurers will follow Norwich Union into demutualisation is creating a boom time for the six investment trusts specialising in traded endowment policies (Teps).

Funds such as the Life Offices Opportunities Trust (Loot) buy endowments on the secondary market to collect the bonuses mutual insurers pay on these policies. They are also in line for any windfall bonuses if these companies float on the stock market.

This has caught the imagination of investors who have piled into the trusts, pushing their shares to a premium, a rare feat in the neglected investment trust sector, where discounts of more than 10 per cent are common. Loot, run by Scottish Value Management, is the most popular at an 8.4 per cent premium. But the five other Tep funds from Kleinwort Benson and Barclays Global Investors also have more buyers than sellers and stand at 5-8 per cent premiums.

Beware, buying a trust at premium means you pay over the odds for the underlying value of the assets. However, Brian Moretta, investment analyst at SVM, points out that investment trusts have never stayed at premiums for long — either the funds fall out of fashion or someone launches a new trust to tap the demand.

It could be worth waiting for share prices to dip, or you may decide the opportunity is too good to squander. Even if other life companies do not demutualise, Tep funds are a relatively low risk way of getting good capital returns over the long term. Beale Dobie, a market-maker in traded endowments, says the average return on endowments last year was around 9 per cent. This is unlikely to decline as most insurers have stopped cutting bonuses and Tep funds invest in better-value longer-dated (25-year) policies.

All Tep funds will pay out when they wind up early in the next century. This fixed timetable makes them useful if you are planning school or university fees. Barclays' two BZW Endowment funds avoid a potential capital gains problem by splitting the capital payments and bonuses over the last five years. Some are Pepable. For instance you can put up to £3000 in the SEC Traded Endowment Fund.

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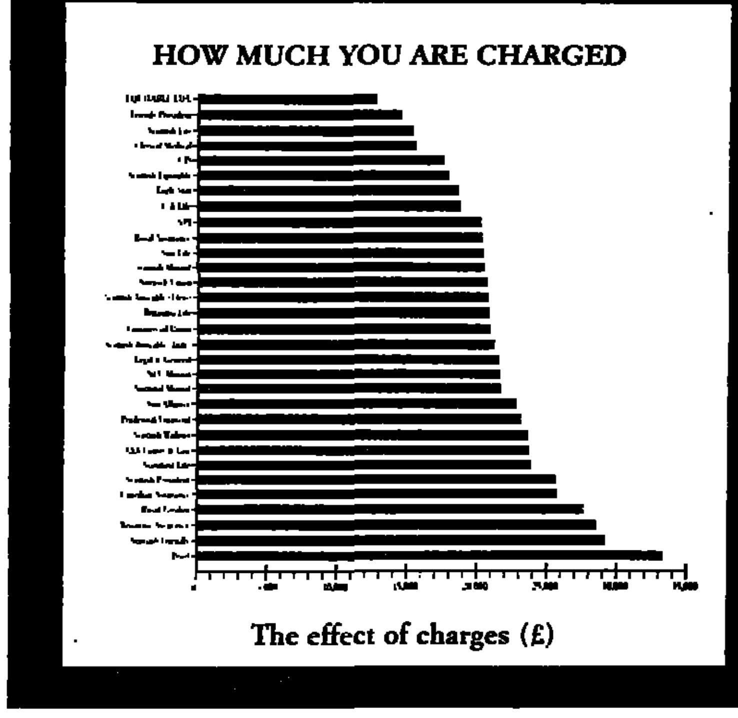

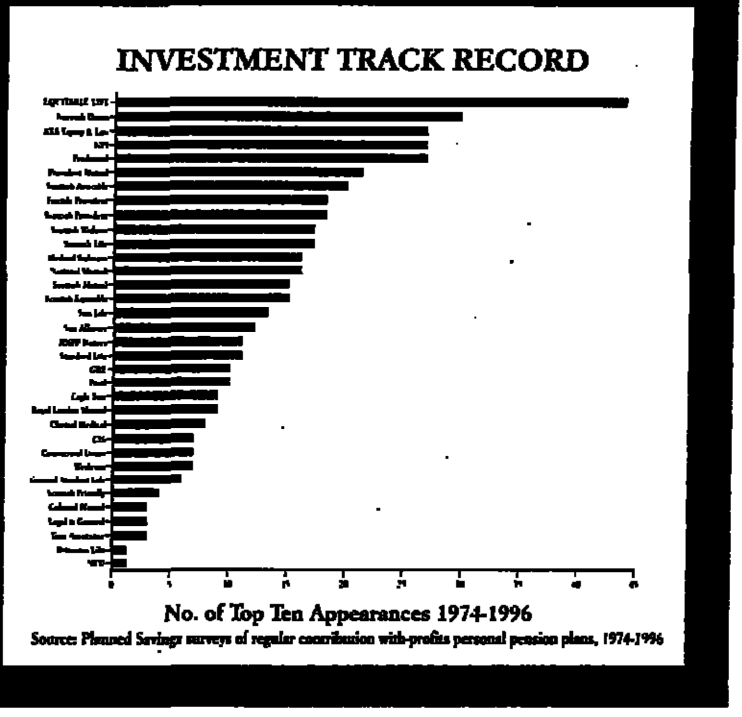

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A QUESTION OF MONEY

Do you suffer from confusion over cashbacks?

The intricate accounting policies of building societies used to be of interest only to the keenest type of accountant. However, in the next few months about 20 million people will become shareholders in four of the top ten building societies as they float on the stock market.

Shareholders will receive details of the newly floated banks' profits and losses, any new acquisitions, plus details of how the businesses are progressing. All these factors can have a big impact on the share prices. Shareholders will have to try to make sense of some of the more obscure methods of accounting.

It is increasingly clear that the way in which building societies treat cashbacks in their accounts is causing problems for some of the analysts who follow the market.

This week the Halifax, reported that it had spent £626 million on mortgage sweeteners, including cashbacks and discounted rates, while the Alliance & Leicester spent £143 million on cashbacks and other incentives. However, other societies' treatment of incentives in their accounts may not have quite the same impact on profits.

Q What is actually meant by a cashback?

A Many building societies have attempted to attract new borrowers by offering a cash lump sum up front. As these payments are a cost, they have to be accounted for in the society's profit and loss account.

Q How are they treated by different societies?

A Some building societies, such as the Halifax, will write off the cashback in the year that the cash is given to the customer. A £3,000 cashback will show up as a £3,000 cost in the society's profit and loss account. Other societies, such as the Northern Rock, will write off the cashback over a period of three years.

Q Why should it matter that cashbacks are treated differently by societies?

A The fact that different societies have different policies makes it very difficult to compare their profits. It also makes it difficult to compare the profits of one society on a continuing basis.

For example, Northern Rock reported a 14 per cent increase in profits to £167.5 million for last year — very healthy growth. This building society does around one third of its lending on a cashback basis. However, if cashbacks are written off in the year they occur, rather than over three years, then Northern Rock's profits would be £39 million lower, and be less than the previous year.

Q How do societies justify writing off cashbacks over more than one year?

A The societies point out that although they are paying a large lump sum up front, borrowers will have to pay back a proportion of this in the first few years of the loan if they choose to redeem their mortgage.

Therefore, lenders do have some cover against the initial cost. Northern Rock also points out that other societies offer discounted loans rather than cashbacks, where the charges are written off over a period of years.

Q So what is the solution for cashbacks?

A Many of those in the industry believe that societies should all be forced to account for their cashbacks on a standard basis. Some analysts believe that the most prudent basis should be used, ie, the liability should all be written off in the year it occurs.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Left in the dark about payment protection

Untrained staff at banks and building societies are failing to explain the terms of policies sold to borrowers to cover mortgage payments if they fall ill or lose their jobs (Sara McConnell writes).

Publishing his annual report, Walter Merricks, the Insurance Ombudsman, said: "The extent of the cover is often not properly explained. For the most part, policies of this sort are sold by staff untrained in the selling of insurance."

Borrowers are under increasing pressure to take out insurance with their mortgages as the Government restricts state help to unemployed or ill borrowers. Since October 1995, new borrowers have had to wait nine months before they can claim help with mortgage repayments. But the policies on offer have been widely attacked by Citizens' Advice Bureaux and housing experts as expensive and inadequate.

Of the complaints received by Mr Merricks this year, 12 per cent involved payment protection policies. Four years ago there were none.

The ombudsman's concern is shared by the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux. The main criticisms centre on "exclusion times" during which the policy will not pay out, restrictive definitions of what constitutes a pre-existing medical condition and perceived discrimination against unemployed people on training schemes.

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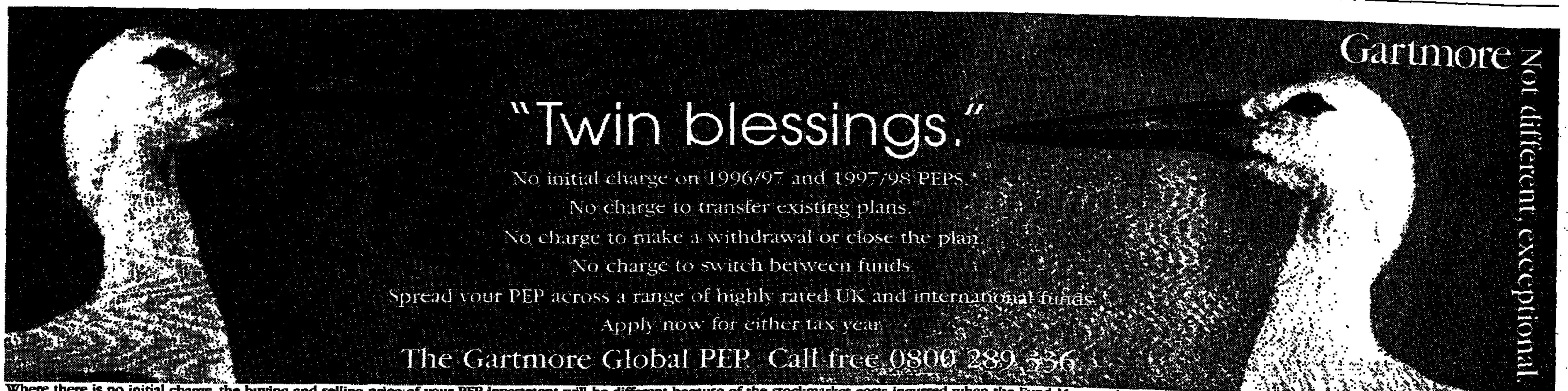

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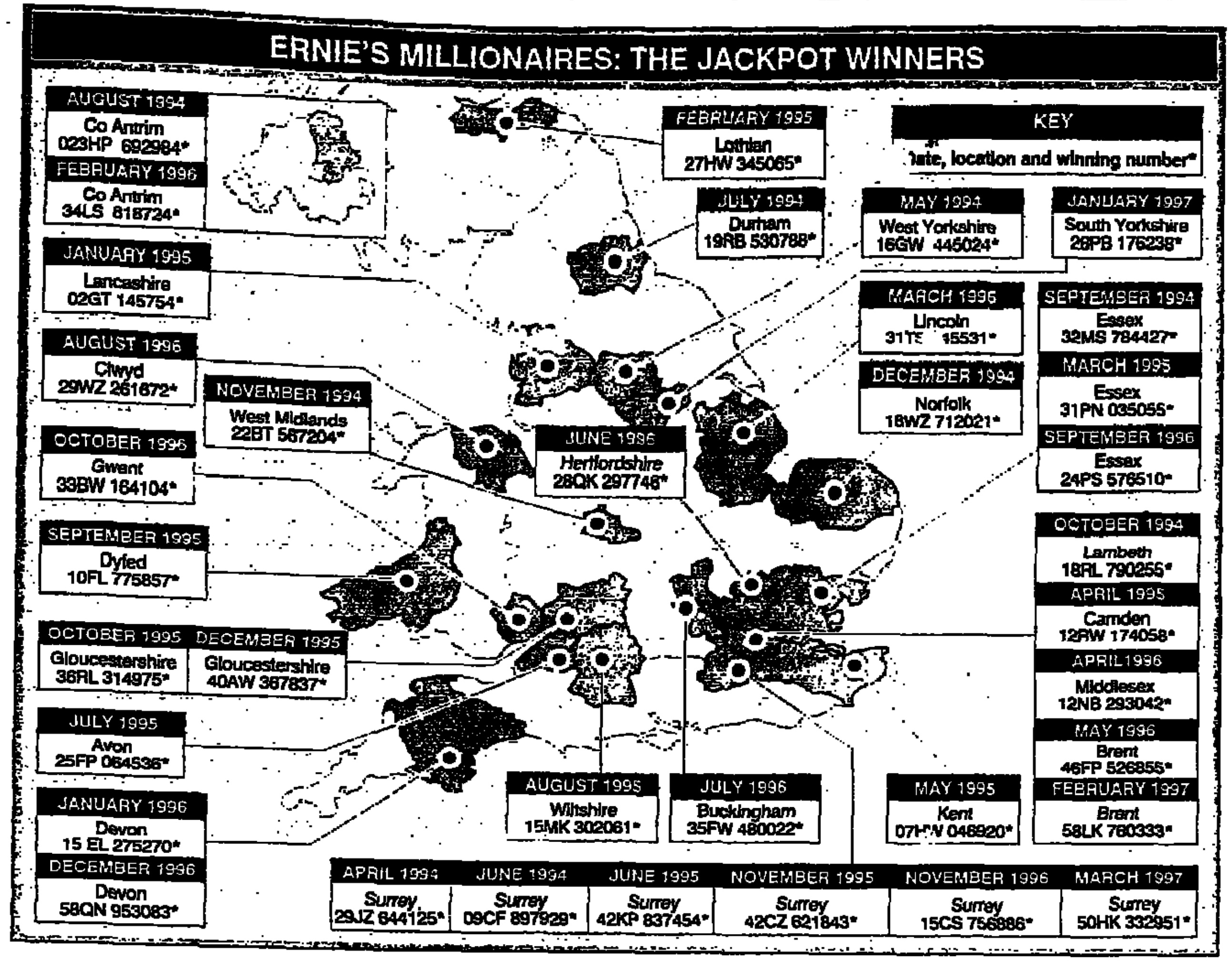
Sara McConnell on a campaign that bore fruit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Turning Ernie into a nice little earner

The odds on winning the Premium Bonds improved significantly this week, as National Savings bowed to pressure from readers of *The Times* and others demanding more chance of regular, small prizes.

Many Weekend Money readers have been angered by National Savings' move last May to abandon fixed odds but pay a fixed number of prizes. Coupled with booming sales, this meant bigger wins for a lucky few but less chance of a £50 or £100 win for others. Now National Savings is reversing this strategy.

Frank Yule, who accused National Savings in Weekend Money letters two weeks ago of turning Premium Bonds from an investment into a lottery, welcomed the volte-face as "excellent news". Since his letter was published, Mr Yule has received letters of support from *Times* readers across the country.

From June, any £1 Bond will have a fixed, one-in-19,000 chance of winning any prize, including the £1 million jackpot. This month, under the present structure, the odds were one in 22,320. National Savings said: "Based on these odds, a person with a maximum holding of £20,000 of Premium Bonds could expect with average luck to win 11 prizes a year. At the new fixed odds of 19,000 to 1, the same investor might expect over a period of time to win an average of 13 prizes a year."

Currently, there is a pre-set limit of 350,000 prizes. Under the new structure there will be no set number of prizes but based on the level of sales in March there will be an estimated 430,000 payouts. The prize fund, currently standing at £7.7 billion, will continue to be divided into three bands. Three quarters of the fund will go in small prizes of £50 and £100, while a further 15 per cent will be allocated to prizes of £1,000 and £500. The remaining 10 per cent will go to fund the biggest prizes of £5,000 and £1 million.

National Savings admitted this week that its attempts to offer fewer, larger prizes had been partly designed to compete with the National Lottery.

Since the £1 million jackpot was announced in November 1993, sales have shot up to £6.6 billion, more than the total sales in the 40 years since Ernest Maples, then Postmaster-General, pressed Ernie's start button for the first time. But many longstanding bondholders see their holdings as investments, not lottery punts. Mr Yule and his wife Priscilla, who have the maximum £20,000 in Premium Bonds, used to win small prizes regularly. But he said: "For the last two months we haven't won anything. We used to get quite a good return."

Another Weekend Money reader, Denys Manning, agreed: "I think most people would rather have a stream of smaller prizes, as well as a flutter." Mr Manning, who has complained to National Savings about the existing prize structure, welcomed the changes, saying: "I didn't think they would listen."

But National Savings will have a harder job convincing holders that there is no secret bias towards newer holdings or those in the South of England. This month's millionaire is from Surrey and the Bond was entered in the draw for the first time. Of the 36 millionaires, six are from Surrey, with three from Essex. Ernie has no favourites, however. There are more winners in the South because more bonds are bought in the South.

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Lizanne Rose gets a front-row ticket to a premiere

So you want to be in the movies?

If you have ever dreamt of being in the movies, a company in Stratford-upon-Avon could make your dreams come true. For a £500 investment in a new production of *King Lear*, to be filmed this summer, you would be entitled to a share in 50 per cent of any net profits, full repayment of your money within a set period, the option to receive a credit in the film's titles, a ticket to the premiere, and the chance to be in the film.

Bob Carruthers, managing director of Cromwell Productions, first had the idea of extra-financed movies when shooting a television documentary about battles. The sight of the extras covered in mud and brandishing swords made him realise that it was but a step away from making movies. Cromwell's first venture was *Chasing the Deer*, a film dramatising the Battle of Culloden. Some 270 people each invested £500 in the project.

The Bruce, with Oliver Reed in the title role, followed in 1995 and *Macbeth*, filmed last summer, will be released in May. Jason Connery and Helen Baxendale play Lord and Lady Macbeth. Cromwell Productions has chosen classics as there will always be a market for this type of entertainment in Britain and abroad.

Mr Carruthers said: "We feel strongly that the films should be substantial, well crafted and stylishly produced. We knew there would be a continuing demand for the subjects of the first two films, which were both driven by a passion the Scots have for their history and culture, and clearly there is healthy demand for the Shakespearean tragedies. Shakespeare works equally well in art house cinemas, on television, video or CD-Rom. Also any play by Shakespeare contains battle, banquet or ball scenes, with walk-on parts for investors."

Mr Carruthers compares film investment to having a share in a racehorse, but with the bonus of being able to take part in the race. But he emphasises the risk. There is no guarantee that capital invested in *King Lear* debentures will be returned, and there will be no share of the profits if sufficient revenue is not generated.

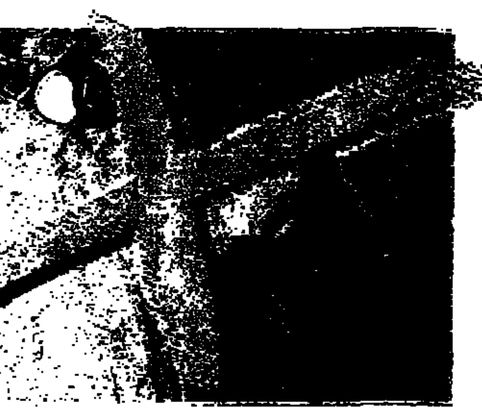
Paul Foster, 36, who owns his own company, invested £1,000 and has appeared as a peasant, a body and a soldier in *Macbeth*. "I had always been interested in films and was looking to invest, but didn't know how to. You hear that films require backers but never how to go about it."

Dr Ian Blake, a retired teacher, also put money into *Macbeth*. He said: "There is the assumption that you are likely to lose it. My friends thought I was rather dotty but I felt it was a fun thing to do." He thought there was likely to be great interest in *Macbeth* but even if it did not do well at the box office, schools always need such films. Another investor was Tanya Harrison, 21. She said: "It was a wonderful chance to get on set and worth the sacrifices to do it."

£750,000 has been invested by enthusiasts in the productions so far. A two-year wait can be expected for returns. The first return of £25.52 was paid in April 1996 to *Chasing The Deer* shareholders. A second follows this April.

Cromwell Productions is on 01789 415187.

Enthusiasts have put up £750,000 for films like *King Lear*



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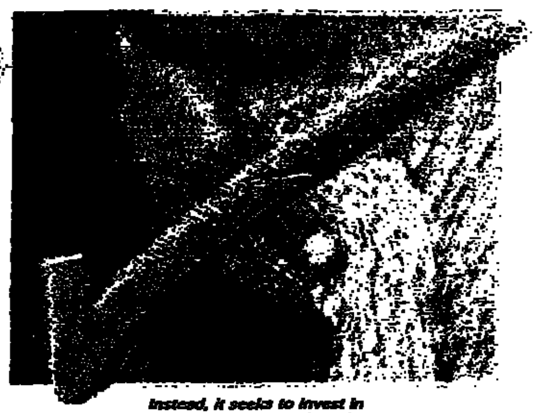

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Caroline Merrell on the rethink over retirement

Action as pensions pyramid crumbles

The Government this week unveiled plans to privatise both the basic and the state pension for the next generation of workers and those in their early twenties. Basic Pension Plus aims to tackle the problem of an ageing population and was inspired by the Chilean experiment. General Pinochet, the former military dictator, swept away the bankrupt state pension scheme and replaced it with a compulsory private *arrangement*.

THE basic pension and the *state earnings* related pension scheme (Serps) are currently paid for directly *from the* national insurance contributions from those in work. No cash is invested to provide the pensions.

As the population ages, and the number of people working to support those *in retirement* shrinks, the current scheme will become unworkable. Both political parties realise that a fundamental rethink of state pensions was needed. According to government statistics, *there are five working people* for every pensioner; by 2030, *five working people will have* to pay the pensions of three pensioners.

The biggest problem faced by the Government was to try to make the younger generation fund its own pensions *while ensuring that it could* also pay the pensions for those entering retirement. In Whitehall, this is known as the "double funding" problem.

Q **How will the Basic Pension Plus scheme work?**

A *This scheme will replace* Serps and the basic pension. The basic pension is currently worth £62.45 per week, around one sixth of the average wage, while the value of Serps pension depends on the number of years in employment and the level of *earnings. The maximum* payout is about £100 a week.

Instead of these pensions, those in their early twenties and those coming up to employment will get a £9-a-week rebate from the Government to be invested to pay for the basic pension, plus a 5 per cent rebate of national insurance contributions to be invested to pay for an additional pension to replace the Serps element.

The Government said that someone investing £9 a week, together with the 5 per cent rebate, should build up a fund *worth £130,000, producing* a £175-a-week pension.

Q **Whom will the new arrangements affect?**

A The proposals will have *fundamental* repercussions for those in their early twenties and those about to start work. The Goverment has reiterated that the new proposals will not affect the rest of the working population and those already receiving their pensions.

Q **How will Basic Pension Plus interact with company pension schemes and personal pensions?**

A About 12 million employees are in *company* pension schemes. Those who come under the Basic Pension Plus scheme will be able to pay additional voluntary contributions into their company scheme, using the two rebates from the Government. It will also be possible to pay the *rebates into a personal* pension, as well as paying *additional contributions.*

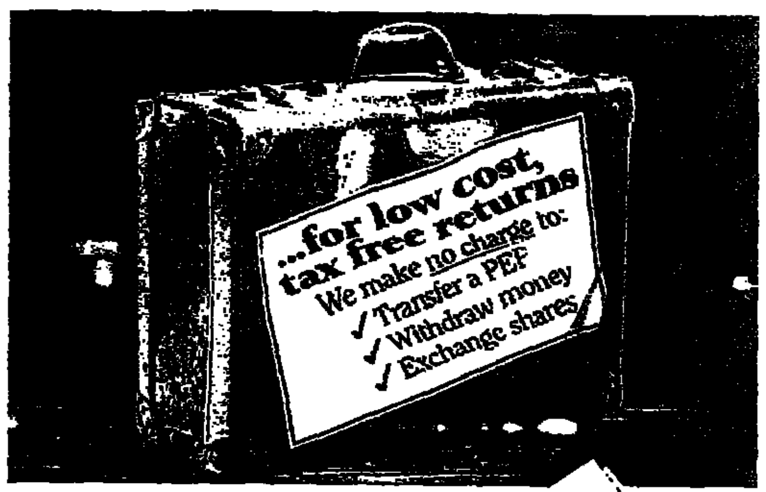
Q **Will Basic Pension Plus be any different from the pensions offered today?**

A Under the new arrange*ments, the tax relief on* pension contributions will be scrapped — eventually saving £8 billion a year. This will go towards paying the pensions of those not covered by the new arrangements.

However, the Government claims that when the new-style *pension is paid at retirement,* it will be entirely free from tax. At the moment, only the lump sum at retirement is tax-free. Under the new arrangements, if the pension exceeds certain yet-to-be-defined limits, it will be taxed. *Despite the £8 billion* expected savings, the Govern*ment estimates a further* £8 billion will be needed for pensions for those who will not come under the new proposals.

Q **Who will manage the contributions to Basic *Pension Plus?***

A Life insurance and investment companies will be given the task of managing this cash. It will be invested in the stock market through a *series of funds, which should,* or so the Government claims, *provide* a boost to the economy. The Personal Investment Authority (PIA), the watchdog that regulates the life insurance industry, is planning to draw up a list of recommended providers. The Govern*ment claims the PIA will* closely monitor the activities of these companies. Keeping down costs will be particularly important.



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Moving forward after divorce

BBC

Like Edina in *Absolutely Fabulous*, having a job when you are divorced is vital to provide a decent pension

The Government's message over the past two weeks could not have been clearer. If you want a pension, don't look to us. People will be expected to take out private pensions to build up retirement income.

New rules allowing the splitting of personal and company pension funds between divorced couples will put the onus on couples to arrange their own finances rather than see the partner (normally the woman) with no pension forced on to the State.

But however keen people are to fund their own retirement, building up a pension is an expensive business. The later you start, the more expensive it is. A Weekend Money reader from Preston, Lancashire, writes:

"I am recently divorced and have no private pension. I have a lump sum of £15,000 with which I would like to start a pension fund. Please advise if I can deposit this whole into a pension or if I would have to start payments from scratch, making a set contribution every month.

"I am 43 years old, working full time and rather anxious that I can start a pension which will be worthwhile having in 22 years time."

Weekend Money replies: You are one of many women affected by delays in sorting out the splitting of pensions on divorce. Last week the Government finally paved the way for pensions to be split immediately on divorce as part of the financial settlement. But such changes will be too late for the hundreds of thousands already divorced. In many cases women who were relying on their husband's pension will face retirement with no provision at all, unless they can make their own.

You have two advantages. The first is that you are working and are therefore allowed to contribute to a personal pension. Under current rules, non working people, even if they have savings, are precluded by Inland Revenue rules from paying into a pension. Your second advantage is that you still have 22 years to build up a pension.

With your £15,000 you have a number of options, depending on your salary. Inland Revenue rules limit pension contributions to a percentage of your salary if you want to claim tax relief on the contributions. People over 40 can put a maximum of 20 per cent of their salary into their pension. Unless you have a very high salary, you would not be able to put the whole £15,000 into your pension in one year just using that year's tax relief.

But you can use up unused relief from the previous seven years, which would allow you to invest a large proportion of this lump sum, according to Mark Bolland of Chamberlain de Broe, the independent financial advisers. But you need to beware you do not breach Revenue rules forbidding you to contribute more than your earnings in any one year.

Putting £15,000 into your pension will not, unfortunately, be enough to give you a decent income in retirement. Mr Bolland calculates that the £15,000 will grow to roughly £50,000 after 22 years, assuming real compound growth of 10 per cent. This will give you an annual income of £5,000, which is not generous. Adding an extra £100 a month from your salary would double this.

SARA MCCONNELL

Search now on for expert help with tax self-assessment

Demand for accountants who can help taxpayers to fill in the new Inland Revenue self-assessment forms is expected to double this year.

The new-style tax returns are being issued this month. The new format consists of eight basic pages and up to nine supplementary sections. A number of accountancy firms have already set up one-stop shops to help people to calculate their tax bill, at a fee of between £50 and £150.

Some of these claim to work out your bill in an hour, but to achieve this you will need to have kept details of your income and investments.

Under the new system, taxpayers will have to keep details of salary, including P45 and P60 forms; rental, investment and dividend income; income from overseas; mortgage relief interest and other loans; capital gains arising from assets bought and sold; income from pensions.

One accountancy firm offering such a service is DBS Management, which will calculate an individual's tax bill for £75 per year. The service is available to employed (schedule E) or retired taxpayers only. Subscribers to the service receive a box file which they can use to keep documents in order during the year, thus simplifying the process of record-keeping.

Another is TAX *etc*, a service run by a small accountancy firm in Bow Lane, London, called London Orientation.

It offers an "off the street" one-hour tax assessment service, although customers will have to bring all their documentation with them.

TAX *etc* will charge a flat fee of £100 for preparing returns where the tax affairs are relatively simple, and £150 for more complex returns.

Neville Russell, the UK's 15th-largest firm of chartered accountants, is also offering a service, the cost of which ranges from between £50 and £70 for groups of people from a firm, or £90 to £110 to process an individual's tax affairs, provided they are relatively simple and accurate data has been supplied by the taxpayer. The fee is based on the assumption that no additional checks are required by the accountant.

Fees cover the costs of an Inland Revenue investigation into your tax affairs.

Further information from Neville Russell on 0171 220 3175; DBS Management on 01484 422224; TAX etc on 0171 236 7583.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

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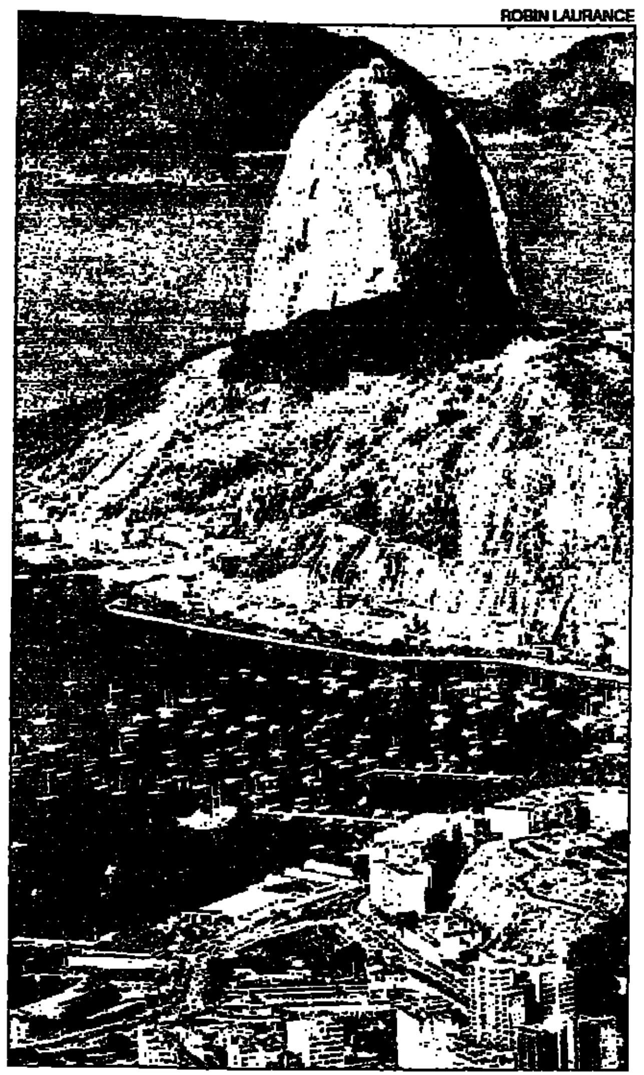
Past problems may have had maturing effect, says **Gavin Lumsden**

Merits of overseas markets re-emerge

TRUST WATCH


ROBIN LAURANCE

Rio riches: Brazil is tipped as a promising emerging market

The dazzling feats of the FT-SE 100 continue to hold the attention of most investors. Despite political concerns, the index of leading shares hit another record this week. However, in some quarters, attention is turning to the emerging markets of Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, the performance of which have lagged behind London and New York.

Latin American markets have never fully recovered from the traumatic collapse of the Mexican peso three years ago, which sent overseas investors scurrying home.

Many of these countries have had their problems compounded by the strengthening dollar, which has made manufactured exports more expensive. Among the Asian markets, Korea and Thailand suffered badly in 1996 as a result of political problems. Thailand, a popular market in the early Nineties, was hit by concerns about its banking sector.

Since 1994 the MSCI Emerging Markets index has fallen by 10 per cent, while the UK, Europe and US have powered on to record heights. But Edward Hocknell, fund manager at Baillie Gifford, the Scottish investment house, says it is buying time again. In addition, the bruising experience of the past few years may have had a maturing effect on emerging markets.

Mr Hocknell has just taken the reins of Baillie Gifford's new Emerging Markets Trust. He has run a similar fund in the US for the past two years. The fund has achieved 17.1 per cent growth in sterling terms, beating the best UK emerging markets trust by 4.6 per cent. Investors who think he can do it again can access the new unit trust with a minimum lump sum of £1,000 or with regular savings from £50 a month. Investors can also put up to £1,500 in the trust as the non-qualifying (non-European) part of a general Pep.

Mr Hocknell achieved his record by focusing on Eastern European countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, while avoiding disaster areas like Mexico and Thailand. He also intends to reduce risk by diversifying the fund into 160 stocks in 21 countries. Among his favourite countries this year are Brazil, Argentina, Indonesia, the Philippines and Taiwan.

Given the poor quality of macroeconomic data on emerging markets, he is employing a bottom-up investment style. This means he looks for companies with decent prospects, wherever they might be, rather than investing in sectors whose time, on economic fundamentals, is deemed to have come. With an average market capitalisation of £2 billion, his stocks will not be tiddlers either.

However, investors should beware of the potential pitfalls of the unit trust structure, particularly in a volatile market. As open-ended funds, unit trusts are obliged to redeem investors' money at any time. They can come badly unstuck if stock markets fall for a prolonged period, provoking panic selling by unit holders. Not only does this push down the unit price, it forces fund managers to ditch the good stocks they can sell quickly to satisfy the need for redemptions.

Investors who are foolhardy or brave enough to hang on can be left in a rump fund holding poor and illiquid stocks. Investment trusts, by contrast, have a limited number of shares, can never be forced sellers and can ride out storms more effectively.

PATCHY PERFORMANCE FROM VENTURES ABROAD

There are 35 emerging markets unit trusts from established groups such as Abtrust, Save & Prosper and Schroders, as well as Baillie Gifford, which already has a Latin America fund in the sector.

But their performances highlight the need for investors to take a long-term view if they venture into emerging markets.

The downturn in fortunes and the rise in the dollar has decimated the returns of the funds over two and three years — the average performance is actually negative over these periods. Only over five years do they move into profit, but they do so in style. The top performer, City of London Emerging Market Country, converted £1,000 into £2,675 from 1991 to the end of 1996.

Baillie Gifford is offering a 2 per cent discount from its 5.25 per cent initial fee until March 21. Its annual management charge is 1.5 per cent.

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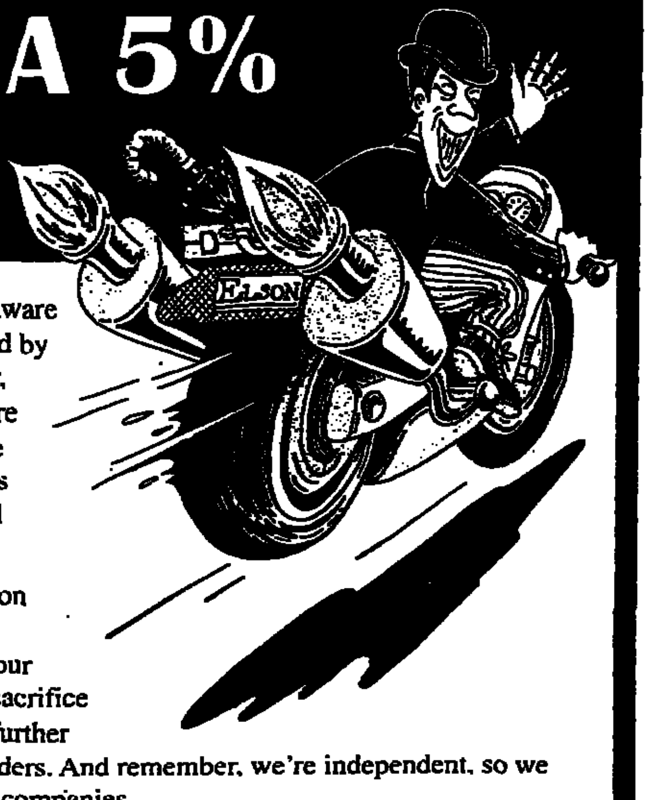

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† The performance of the FT-SE® 100 Index over five years to 27 December 1996 is calculated on an offer to bid basis including all dividend income net of tax. Tessa performance is based on the average of all Tessas available for the whole period. Source, HSW.

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

How the terminal bonus was created

From Mr J. Cooper

Sir, Mr Lee Brown (Insurance companies and *terminal bonuses on endowment* policies, Weekend Money Letters, February 15) asks why a forecast of terminal bonuses cannot be given by a *life assurance company* if it is possible to forecast or at least give projections for reversionary bonuses.

There is indeed a simple logical answer, which lies in the original reason for introducing such bonuses. Terminal bonuses were introduced at a time of inflation and rising stock market values, high interest rates and volatile stock markets. It was felt that policyholders who had accumulated smaller bonuses over many years, were less well treated than those who had joined later and were sharing in the recent rises and inflated profits which the other policyholders had only a short time to enjoy before policies matured. The terminal bonus was added to give a boost to old policies and treat longstanding policyholders more fairly.

However, as it only dealt with windfall profits occurring late in the policy's life, it could not be projected or forecast. It was never intended to replace the reversionary regular bonus declaration, the two kinds of bonus serve different purposes. You have no right to a terminal bonus until it is declared.

One suspects that present *practice in* life assurance companies may stray from the theory of terminal bonus sometimes, but they should still be able to explain the *background*. Perhaps too many of the staff who were there at the time have been made redundant.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN COOPER,
Yacht & Boat Insurance Service,
Lime Kiln Quay,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Why the wait for my pension?

From Mr I.E. Palmer

Sir, I thought you might like to know how the Government treats new pensioners.

I was 60 on January 27, 1997 (a Monday). On the very same day they deducted £35 from my husband's pension but I got nothing until a fortnight later, when they paid two weeks in arrears. Now I need to wait until March 9, when I will get four week's pension in arrears.

Annuities are paid in advance. Why does the Government sit on my money? What do poor old people do who have no money to tide them over?

Yours faithfully,
I. PALMER,
Wyton House,
Sawtry Way,
Kings Ripton,
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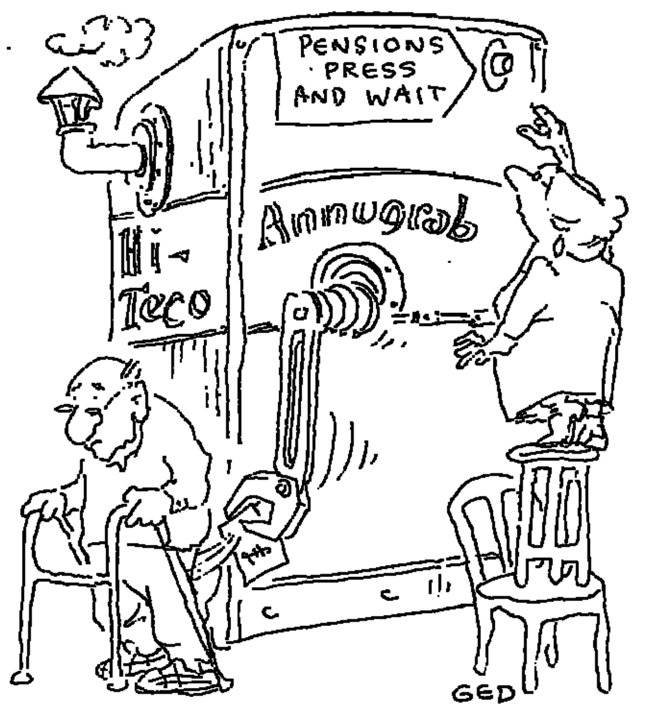

Ethics and women in power

From Mr D.Lindsay

Sir, It does not appear from your article on "ethical" investing (Investors in search of a piece of the ethical action, February 22) that any *thought* has yet been given to the "ethics" of those listed companies that do not yet have a woman on their board or do *not yet pay* "bridging pensions" to their male pensioners betweeen the ages of 60 and 65 to compensate them for the State pension that is denied them (and, often, their wives, too) between those ages.

As these are matters of human rights, which would be particularly easy to research, this neglect is most surprising.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LINDSAY,
36 Orchard Coombe,
Whitchurch Hill,
Reading, Berkshire.

Let his brain take the strain

From Mr L.A.M. Clegg

Sir, Am I in shape for self-assessment? I feel fairly confident that I am, but I am thoroughly perplexed by the fuss made over the essential records that we shall all have to keep in the future.

It is my understanding that taxpayers have always been expected to keep documentary evidence relating to their relevant income and expenditure: *P60s, P11s, records of expenses*, Miras certificates, dividend counterfoils, contract notes and so on.

It is many years since the inspector to whom I made returns as an employee insisted that the entry "as returned by the employer" was no longer adequate.

The most significant change is the opportunity for taxpayers to calculate their own tax bills. As a firm believer in the principle that calculations should be checked wherever possible, I propose to let the inspector make the calculations and check his figures, rather than trust him to check *my calculations. This surely is* the message for all taxpayers.

Yours faithfully,
L. CLEGG,
Bishop's Down Grange,
14 Manor Park,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

■ Letters to Weekend Money are welcomed, but *The Times* regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for the advice or statements given in these columns and it must be emphasised that independent professional advice should always be sought. Letters to Weekend Money can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5082.

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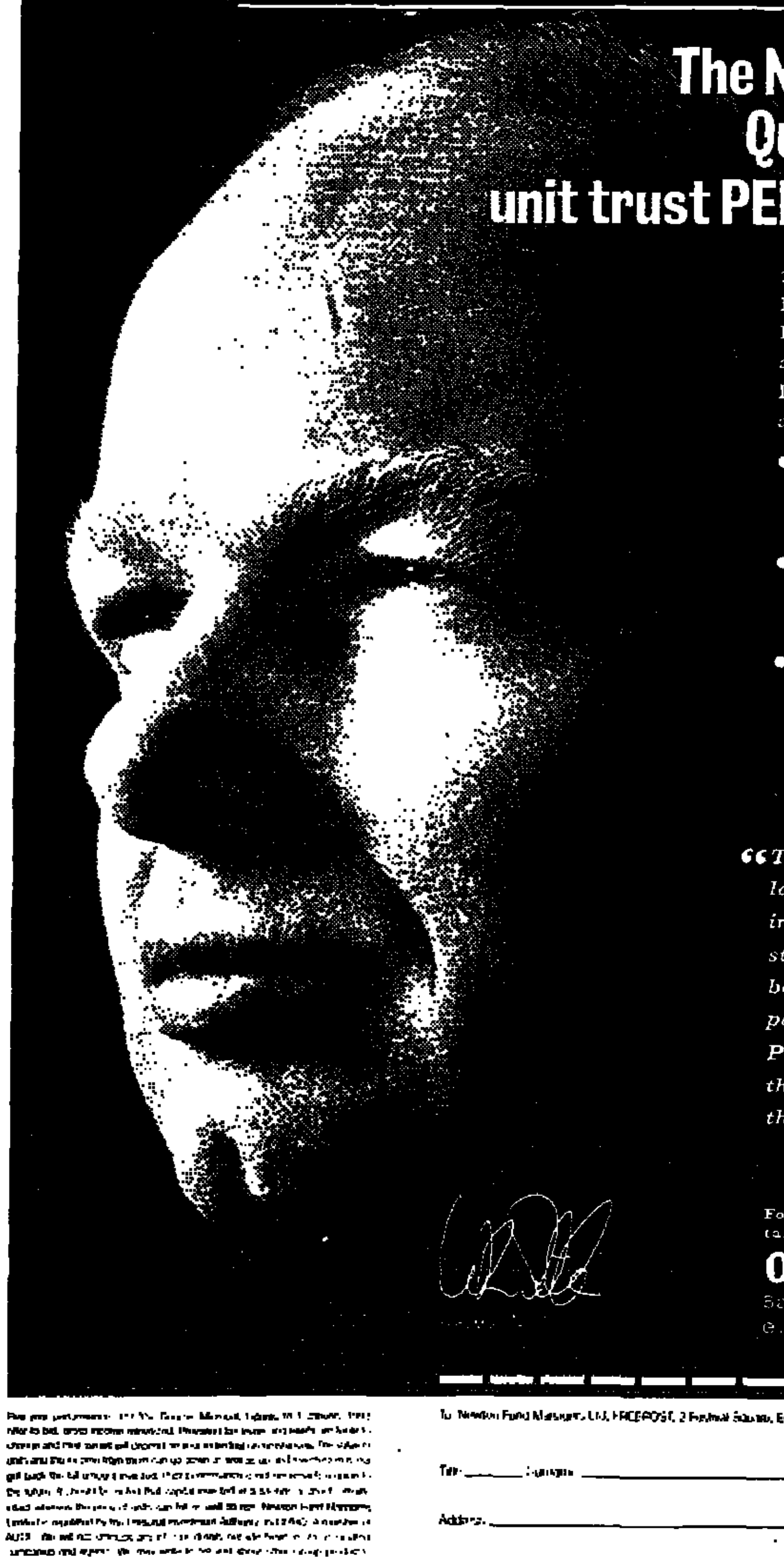

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556	407½	Allied Domecq	457	+ 6	6.6	13.8
625	477	Bulmer (HP)	625	+ 5	2.7	18.6
137	63½	Burn Stewart	70½		6.0	74.9
1005	615	Glenmorangie A	1025		1.5	27.2
496	411	Grand Met	479	+ 6	4.1	15..
493	426	Guinness	482½	+ 7	3.9	15..
380	315	Highland Distl	369	+ 3	2.8	17.6
803	255½	Matthew Clark	321	- 1	9.3	15.3
141	91½	Merrydown W	106		5.4	14.3
2612½	1375	SA Breweries	1878½	+ 2½	1.9	

BANKS

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
4706¼	2743¾	ABN-AMRO	4459¾	- 21½	2.6	18.3
811	528	Abbey Natl	782½	+ 7	4.3	13.5
455½	315	Allied Irish	434½		4.2	
409½	285	Aus New Z	380	- ½	5.0	
7609¾	3843¾	Bank America	7400	+ 150		
373½	227½	Bank Scotland	349½	- 5½	2.6	12.9
1226	683	Barclays	1114	+ 3½	5.5	11.3
631½	413	Bk of Ireland	619½		2.4	14.0
7884¾	4031¼	Citicorp	7640¾	+ 65¼		
1621¼	1268¾	Commerzbk	1621½	+ 37½	2.7	
1350	609¾	Dai Ichi Kan Y	671¼	+ 16½	0.6	
3412¾	2709¾	Deutsche Bk	3334¾	- 21½	2.0	
903½	593½	Espirito Santo	903½	+ 3½	3.8	12.6
1507	600½	Fuji Bank Y	702½	+ 19	0.6	
1622	931	HSBC	1616½	+ 20	3.2	13.8
1563½	930	HSBC HK	1557½	+ 14½	3.3	13.3
600	395	Irish Perm	600		2.7	
534	384½	Lloyds TSB	515	- 8½	3.2	16.1
819½	566	Nat Aust Bk	785	- 13	5.4	10.3
844½	605½	Nat Westm	744	- 6	4.9	11.2
632½	464	Ryl Bk Scot	591	- 12½	3.9	13.1
900½	547	Stand Chart	900	+ 7½	2.0	16.0
£174½	£131½	Wells Fargo	£164½		2.0	
374½	264	Westpac	347	- ½	4.0	10.9

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
878½	702	Bass	846	- 8½	3.7	16.7
70	40	Brk for the Bdr	64		3.4	17.5
205	161	Burtonwd Brw	188½		3.7	17.0
153	92	City Centre Rest	153		1.8	28.8
744½	463	Compass Grp	706½	- 15½	1.5	28.0
298½	190	Eldridge P 'A'	289½		2.3	17.7
540	413	Fullr Smi 'A'	482½	+ 2½	2.4	16.1
636	545½	Greenalls Grp	556	- 4	3.5	17.5
750	567½	Greene King	740	- 1½	2.7	18.2
285	164½	Grosvenor Inns	215½		3.5	20.8
285	204	Groupe Chez Ger	281½	- 2	1.3	27.5
352	276½	Hardy Hanson	298½	+ 5	4.4	13.5
3475	2700	Holt J	2762½		2.6	14.9
77	45	Inn Business	75½	- 1	2.6	
356	298	Mansfield	356		2.2	16.4
353½	252	Marston Thmp	294		3.2	11.0
650	524	Morland	605		2.9	15.9
188½	118	My Kinda Town	188		2.0	16.4
72½	38½	Paramount	59½			
698	217	PizzaExpress	633	- 1	0.6	41.3
438	245	Randalls (H)	412½	+ 2½	1.5	
378½	138½	Regent Inns	347½		0.9	33.2
709	601	Scot & New	608½	- 6½	3.8	20.2
313	246	Vaux Group	286	+ 1½	4.6	13.6
1255	640	Wetherspoon JD	1166½	- 1	1.0	26.0
819	672	Whitbread	803½	+ 1½	3.5	16.3
706½	578	Wolvrhmptn D	702½	+ 2	3.0	15.5
477½	207	Yates Bros	477½		1.0	30.9
650	425	Young 'A'	630		3.1	24.7

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
34½	15	AAF Inds	25½			
302	135	Abbey	195		3.6	20.0
297½	212¾	Allen	286½	+ 1	3.0	17.5
125½	96½	Amec	125½	+ 1½	3.0	21.1
489	117	Amey	479½		2.0	30.3
532½	233	Andrews Sykes	490		1.3	10.6
282½	152	Ashtead	257½	- 1	1.5	23.2
48½	26	Avonside	44		2.8	
42	24	Bailey (Ben) Con	37		3.5	14.9
39½	18½	Bandt	39½		3.5	24.7

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
467½	328	Electrocomponts	428½	+ 8	2.8	26.8
314	126½	Eurodis Elect	203½		3.0	29.0
156	65	Eurodollar	137		5.5	13.9
185	76	European Mtr	89	- ½	7.4	9.1
375	217	Evans Halshaw	260		3.9	10.2
67	39½	Fife Indmar	50½		8.2	7.6
397½	239¾	Finelist Grp A	386½		2.1	19.5
34½	16½	Gardner	30½		3.6	12.6
81	33½	Gestetner	72	- ½	1.8	21.3
110	79½	Gowrings	106	- ½	3.2	18.0
101	72	Hamlet	94	- ½	8.0	8.7
290	216	Harris (Philip)	290	3½	4.2	15.8
317½	200½	Headlam	316		2.3	26.7
202	137	Holders Tech	149		5.0	14.0
242½	163	ICA Int	223½	+ 1	1.6	
316	231	Inchcape	278½	- 1	3.8	73.0
78	33	Jacks (Wm)	52½		4.8	18.1
260	163	Kwik Fit	227½	- 1	2.9	18.3
390	299	Lex Service	350	- 1½	5.9	10.9
155	105	Lookers	109½	+ ½	3.6	7.0
	10½	Malaya Grp	13½	+ ½	6.0	14.8
9½	5½	Meddevex	8	+ ½	1.2	12.2
47	31	Medisales	33		0.8	
565	229	Nortcom	252½	+ 18	4.0	7.0
174½	115	Northamber	164		1.1	9.8
370½	201½	Partco	352½		3.0	
404½	272	Pendragon	335		3.2	
212½	145	Perry Gp	211½		4.9	10.8
752½	480	Premier Farnell	491½	- 2	2.9	19.1
193	125	Quarto Group	146½		5.5	11.0
349	185	REA	328		1.5	39.3
3	2	Reece	2½			
54	28	Ronson	23½		0.0	8.1
4½	2	Ross Gp	3			
56	25½	SEP Indl	27½		8.0	7.3
195	55	Salter	57½		2.2	18.6
417½	246	Time Products	415½		3.3	17.0
291½	123	UNIPCO	241½	- 2½	2.6	17.3
252½	203½	Vardy (Reg)	229½	+ 1½	2.6	14.6
650	325	WF Elect	515		2.7	22.2
59	25½	Walshaw	35½	+ 2	2.9	10.7
172½	75½	Wyko	150½		2.1	18.5
154½	104	Young (H)	142½		3.7	12.3

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
420	288	Antofagasta	390½	+ 2½	1.6	15.5
387	263	Assoc Hldgs	314½		2.1	
1056	785	[illegible]	636½	+ 6	2.9	18.9
340	229	BTR	276	+ 16½	4.4	14.9
586	411	BAT	560½	+ 1½	6.1	11.6
186	108	Bibby (J)	184½	+ 3	5.1	10.7
65	58½	Brierley Inv	60½	+ 1	7.6	10.2
972	715	Charter	761	-	4.6	10.8
328	205	Cookson	238½	+ 4½	4.6	17.1
229½	141	[illegible]	211		5.8	10.2
312½	204	DCC	306½		2.8	12.4
141½	103½	Grampian Hldg	124½	- ½	6.3	12.8
172½	118½	Hanson Crstle	139½	+ ½	8.1	13.7
509½	379½	Hutch Whamp	471	+ 3	2.2	19.2
437½	352	Imperial Tobacco	416½	+ ½	6.0	8.3
563½	344½	Jardine Math	377	- 1½	4.1	
217½	116½	Lonrho	147½		4.0	13.4
191	164	McLeod Russel	172		4.9	14.0
478	302	Powell Duffryn	425		7.4	16.7
146	97	Ropner	145		7.1	12.5
232	153½	Stanley	178½	+ 1	6.4	12.8
607	499½	Swire Pacific	533½	- 2	2.5	19.4
358	268	IT Group	330		2.6	15.7
256½	222½	Tomkins	283½	- 2	4.5	14.1
295	167½	Unitech	210		8.7	
512½	365	Wardle Storeys	455	- 2	5.2	16.8
354	254	Wassall	354	+ ½	2.1	20.8
232	129½	Whatman	160		3.9	12.8
369½	294½	Williams Hldg	333	+ 6	5.5	14.9

ELECTRICITY

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
163½	89	Br Energy P/P	137½	- 1½	7.3	
737	479	East Midlands	670		5.9	9.9
570½	520	Energy Group	526	- ½	6.0	10.2
873	565	London Elect	704½		7.3	10.8
217½	164½	National Grid	213½		6.5	8.6
615	373½	National Power	505	+ ½	5.8	9.6
724	484	Northern Elec	651		8.4	5.9
456	308	Nthn Ireland	383		6.4	6.0
664	462	PowerGen	621½	- 2½	4.5	7.2

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
84	30	Simon Eng	40½		2.0	15.1
301	127½	Six Hundred	144		4.1	7.8
833½	622	Smiths Ind	793½		2.6	20.4
780½	593	Spirax-Sarco	645		2.7	18.0
324	323½	Sterling Ind	286		3.9	14.4
593½	456	TI	540½	- 9½	3.1	19.3
124	92	Tinsley (E)	113½		6.5	11.8
121	72	TransTec	120		2.4	21.4
212½	140	Triplex Lloyd	192½		4.5	10.9
167½	137	Unicorn Ind	167½		4.1	14.9
82½	47½	Utd Inds	65		4.7	18.3
302	241	Vickers	270		3.2	16.6
14	8½	Villers Grp	9½			
770	621	Vitec	636		2.1	11.9
952	750	Vosper Thorny	913	- 17	3.3	15.3
438	293	Wagon Ind	324		7.6	9.9
273½	203½	Weir	216½	- 1	4.4	13.5
275	228	Wellington Hdg	256½		3.8	15.9
59	25	Wellman	30	- ½	7.5	6.8
61½	26	Wescol	60½		2.1	23.2
575	363	Whessoe	530		2.9	21.7
122	42½	Wolseley	55		8.0	16.6

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
451	109	Adwest	130½		7.6	18.0
295	180	Airflow Streams	195		5.1	8.4
753½	473	Avon Rubber	749		3.3	14.5
107	57½	BSG	103½	- 1	3.9	16.1
353	227½	Bertrams	257½		3.3	10.6
29	15	Boustead	16½		7.6	38.7
707	431	First Tech		- ½	1.7	20.4
1186	778	GKN	1020	+ ½	3.3	15.4
3800	2950	General Mtr	3267½		3.8	
669	497	Henlys	543½	- 1½	3.5	12.6
1975½	1312¾	Honda Motor	1901	- 2	0.4	
502	357½	Laird	359		4.7	10.9
262	172	LucasVarity	207	- 3	0.0	
165	91	Mayflower	165	+ 5	1.7	
193	145	Syltone	170½	- 2	4.3	12.5
190½	120½	T & N	157		4.9	
116	39½	Toad	40			
433	252½	Trinity Hldgs	333½	+ 4½	3.1	17.0

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
506½	355	AB Food	468		2.4	16.0
311½	233	Acatos & Hutchi	301		4.2	40.6
53	38½	Albert Fisher	42½	- ½	11.1	10.3
326	265	Banks (S C)	298½		4.7	11.3
405	313	Barr (AG)	392½		2.8	21.3
43	21	Bensons Crisps	40½		3.1	10.2
418½	341	Booker	343½		8.5	13.5
39	20½	Borthwick	28	+ ½	5.8	35.4
507	167	CPL Aromas	217½	- 1½	2.9	11.0
557	464	Cadbury-Schw	539		4.0	14.4
88½	65	Canadian Pizza	97		6.6	
348	298	Carr Milling	319		4.1	10.3
112	66	Cavaghan	75		6.2	
285½	171	Cranswick	235½	+ ½	5.1	13.8
225	182½	Dairy Crest Group	216½		5.3	10.7
444	297½	Dalgety	331	- ½	8.5	28.1
47½	30½	Daniels S	40½		0.6	
281½	215	Devro	275½		3.6	27.2
99½	67	Finlay (James)	99½	+ 1	4.6	19.1
274	186	Geest	256½		3.9	
26	16	Global	23		3.3	15.3
380	278	Greencore	370	- 1½	2.4	

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
377½	314	Dunedin Smlr	374½		3.0	39.3
177	153½	Dunedin Wrldw	166½	+ 1	1.4	66.6
115½	82½	Edin Dragon	90			
30½	23½	Edinburgh Inca	29½			
371½	312½	Edinburgh	368½	+ 1	3.5	32.0
177	107½	EFM Japan	115½	+ ½		
507	362	Electra Inv	470½		2.2	44.0
268½	222	Electric Gen	269½	+ ½	1.7	57.9
267½	43	English Nat	208	+ 8	0.2	
156	130	English Scott	154½	+ ½		
419½	332	European Assets	397		1.3	
108½	88½	Fidelity Asian Val	103½			
252½	193	Fidelity Euro Val	251½	- 1		
85¼	40½	Fidelity Jap Val	41½	+ ½	0.3	
139½	102	Fidelity Spec Val	132½		0.5	
225½	171½	Finsbury 'A'	225½		7.2	50.8
280½	162½	Fmn Ar Chile	191½	+ 1	1.6	55.8
43½	25	Fmn Ar Wts	26½	- ½		
431½	273	Fleming Amer	429½		0.8	
75½	54	Fleming Chinese	74½		0.8	
44	17	Fleming Ch Wts	28½			
325½	250	Fleming Claver	324		2.5	
438	343	Fleming Cont	422½	+ 1	1.2	
160	110½	Fleming Em Mkts	138½		0.2	
273	227½	Fleming Enterp	251½	- ½	2.7	31.7
388	288	Fleming F East	274	+ ½	0.6	
464	395	Fleming Fledg	421		0.6	
110½	100½	Fleming Ing Inct	109	+ ½	10.9	
172	99	Fleming Ing Cap	171	+ 3½		
73½	38½	Fleming Indian	49½	- ½		
41	17½	Fleming In Wts	20½	- ½		
790	170	Fleming Japan	179½	+ 2½		
379	286	Fleming Merc	379	+ 2½	2.7	40.3
173	95	Fleming Natl Res	114	+ ½	0.6	
366	317	Fleming Overs	347½	+ ½	1.7	71.4
159½	128	Fleming Smlr Cor	158½	+ 1	3.5	33.4
171	146½	Foreign & Col	161½	+ ½	1.7	74.7
113	87	F&C Inc Gwth	93		4.8	27.3
116	85	F&C Emg Mkts	107½	+ ½		
147½	85½	F&C Enterprise	142½		1.1	
331	257	F&C Eurotst	323		0.5	
148½	125	F&C German	148	+ ½	0.5	
207	156½	F&C Pacific	157½	+ ½	1.5	54.8
149½	134	F&C PEP	146		3.6	33.7
200	166½	F&C Smaller	192½	+ 1	1.7	72.7
147	122½	F&C US Smlr	133½	+ ½		
61½	50	Framlin Inc	61½		10.1	11.0
84½	58	Framlin Cap	84½			

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
92	49½	INVESCO Jap Dis	50½			
137	74½	INVESCO Korea	80½			
63½	36½	INVESCO Tokyo	39½			
95½	65	J Fry 2nd U	90		8.9	11.2
94½	66½	J Fry Euro U	94½		6.0	14.8
260	136½	JF Fledg Jap	137½	+ ½		
108½	74	Jupiter Ex Inc	107½	- ½	9.2	10.6
13½	3½	Jupiter Ex IncW	13	- ½		
86	70	Jupiter Grd Capt	85½	+ ½	11.4	10.9
36½	24½	Jupiter Grd Ptd	35½			
134½	108	Jupiter Intl Grn	134½		3.5	
336½	252	Klnwt Chrt	335½		2.2	50.0
130	98½	Klnwt E Mkt	112½	+ 1½	..	..

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Legal & General Investment Management

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
170½	133	Klnwt End	161			
96	74	Klnwt H Inc	96		12.9	10.2
301½	261	Klnwt O'seas	299½	+ ½	1.7	79.7
188½	136	Klnwt Smlr	187½		2.2	56.5
597	286	Korea Euro	321	+ 1½	0.4	
134	85½	Latin American	132½	+ ½		
1035	913	Law Debenture	953½	- 3	3.0	34.0
132	99	Lloyds Sm Cap	132	- ½		
57	22	Lloyds Sm Dw	25½		22.2	
157½	126	Lloyds Sm Pkg	157½	+ ½	3.1	40.6
174	151	Lon Sr Lawrence	166½		4.7	36.7
353	269	Lowland	316½		4.3	24.6
695	573	M&G 2nd Dual Cp	682½	2½		
114	75½	M&G 2nd Dual In	78½			
3490	2903	M&G Dual Cap#	3460			
335	95	M&G Dual Inc#	99			

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
204½	135	Murray S/C Cap	203½	- 1		
73½	66	Murray S/C Inct	67½	+ ½	20.8	5.6
3750	2850	Murray S/C Dist	3650		4.0	
511	419	Murray Small	476		1.3	70.3
407½	355	Murray Vent	398½		4.6	22.5
9	5½	Newmarket	5½			
415	353½	O'seas Inv Tst	397	+ ½	1.2	
218	156½	O'seas Wts	205	+ ½		
147	112	Pacific Assets	119½	+ ½	0.4	
109	89	Perp Inc Gth	108½		2.0	
93½	46	Perpetual Jap	47½	- ½		
306½	287	Perpt Uk Sm Co	300		0.8	76.0
£137½	£111½	Personal Assets	£137	+ 75	2.1	47.3
127½	103	Pilot Inv	127½	+ 1	2.1	51.9
134½	108	Prolific Inc	134½	- ½	4.4	32.5
251½	210	RIT Cap Ptnr	249		0.6	
575	450	Robeco	515½	+ 2	2.2	
542	475	Rolinco	529½	+ 2½	1.2	
120½	97	Schrod Asia Pac	102½		0.2	
135½	110	Schrod Inc Gwth	135	+ ½	3.7	25.6
95	51	Schrod Jap Gwth	55½			
927½	403½	Schrod Korea	467½	+ 2½		
29	18½	Schrod Split Cap	28½	- ½		
115	92	Schrod Split Inct	113½		9.0	
146½	128½	Schrod Split Zero	146½			
137½	117	Schrod UK Gwth	134		2.8	76.2
201½	181	Schrod Vent Inv	198½			
298½	254	Scot	296	- ½	3.5	43.0
181½	159	Scot American	180½	+ ½	3.6	38.1
368	277	Scot Asian	306	+ 1		
1065	675	Scot Wts	845			
111½	92½	Scot Eastern	109½	+ ½	2.2	
307	263	Scot Mtge	296		3.0	49.9
100	88	Scot Natl Trst	99½		10.4	11.6
125½	106½	Scot Value	124		2.0	61.3
2126	1823	Second Alliance	2066	- 1½	2.9	41.3
109½	89	Secs Tst of Scot	109½	+ ½	4.2	20.3
155½	130	Shires Smlr	152½		4.9	24.5
385	345	St Andrew Inv	384		3.1	
409½	339½	Temple Bar	402	+ 1	5.0	22.9
127	90	Thrmtn Asian E	125			
87½	73	Throgmorton	85½		3.4	40.8
157½	125½	Triton Eng Mid	148½	+ ½	0.8	
193½	152	TR City Of Lon	192½	+ ½	4.0	29.7
176½	96½	TR Euro Growth	172½	+ 1	2.5	
193	169	TR Far East	180½	+ ½	4.7	27.3
135	103	TR High Inc	134	+ ½	6.0	18.3
131	104½	TR Pacific	118½	+ ½	0.3	

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
319½	201	Jarvis Hotel	319½	+ ½	2.7	17.2
31½	19	Kunick	27		3.2	17.7
245½	143	Ladbroke	243	+ 7	3.2	26.4
401½	212½	London Clubs	390	+ 1½	2.5	25.8
231	145	MacDonald Hls	225½		2.2	34.5
733½	186	Man Utd	647½	- 10	1.0	43.1
96½	77½	Mandarin Orntl	79½	+ ½	4.3	17.8
407½	278	Millennium & Cop	404		1.5	16.9
231	89	Northern	225	- 1½	2.4	23.0
188½	114	Prism Leisure	183½		4.2	9.9
38	28	Queensborough	35			
32	11½	Queens Moat	15½			
547	398	Rank Grp	444	+ 8½	4.9	44.5
47	31	Ryan Hotels	45½		4.7	9.2
1525	930	Savoy Hotel 'A'	1420		1.2	55.4
223½	171½	Sinclair (Wm)	221½		4.6	12.7
153½	45	Southampton	90		1.4	
110½	75½	Stakis	107		2.5	17.5
373	167½	Stanley Leisure	320		1.4	31.8
20½	8½	Landem	9			
346	346	Tamong	346		1.5	22.2
210	156	Thistle Hotels	186	- 6½	2.5	18.0
142	44½	Tottenham Hot	112½		1.0	15.0
177½	85	Toy Options	99½		4.4	8.0
350	234½	VCI	263½		3.4	14.9
138	78½	Vardon	127½	+ 1½	1.9	
417½	306	Wembley	397½	- 1	0.6	12.8
130	90½	Zetters Gp	96		13.0	10.4

MEDIA

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
186	113½	CIA Gp	162½		1.7	18.8
734	516½	Capital Radio	570	+ 2½	2.7	19.5
577½	379½	Carlton Comms	527½	- 9	2.6	16.6
852½	363	Chrysalis	780		0.4	
95	77½	City of Lon	80½	2	8.1	10.8
108	89½	Cordiant	99½			
1741½	1300	Daily Mail	1659½		1.5	27.2
1668½	1168½	Daily Mail 'A'	1593½	- 6½	1.5	26.1
64½	10	Dorling Kind	334	- ½	1.7	21.3
831½	530	EMAP	762½	- 6	1.9	26.3
1488	1085½	EMI	1173	+ ½	3.0	28.8
1091	845½	Elsevier	1034½	+ 5	1.8	30.2
1515	1030	Euromoney Pbl	1442½		4.0	20.2
49	19	Fitch	45½		1.1	
803½	441	Flextech	767½	1½		

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
251	198	CLT Group	223		5.4	15.5
259½	168½	GWR Gp	227½		1.5	38.4
387½	200	Granada Group	363½	+ 3½	2.2	19.1
33½	18	Goodhead	31½		1.0	19.2
377½	217	Grampian	275		2.9	22.0
401	294	HTV Group	351½	+ 1	1.5	
335	232½	Haynes Pub	282½		4.9	12.7
27	17	Highway Hse	19½			
260	199	Hodder H'Cne	219		3.7	22.7
285	145	Home Counts	262½		2.6	29.9
334	273	IBC	323		3.2	12.1
35½	10½	Incepta	33			15.6
347½	232	Independent	327½	- 2½	3.0	38.8
110	95	Inveresk	105		4.6	12.5
207½	134½	Johnston Press	202½		1.4	22.0
32½	13	Lowe	28½	+ 2	2.4	
380	140	MAI	172½	- 2½		
330	220	Marden	316		1.9	37.9
71	26½	Mediakey	29	+ 1½	4.1	
1765	647	Metal Bulletin	1212½	- 12½	2.1	
155	108	Midland Ind	147	- ½	3.1	33.5
241	175	Mirror Gp	211½	- ½	2.5	15.6
707½	447½	More Grp	633		2.9	
393	302½	News Corp	328½	- 1	0.4	8.7
335½	251½	News Corp Prf	278	- 1	1.3	
224½	37½	On Demand Inf	37½	- 2½		
42	30	Osprey Comms	29			33.2
797½	594	Pearson	786½	+ 5	2.7	37.6
1220	980	Reed Intl	1186	- 8½	2.7	21.2
814	596	Reuters	645½	- 1½	2.3	20.8
404	296	Scot Radio	382½	- 1½	2.5	22.5
806	468	Scot TV	681	+ ½	3.5	21.6
519	297	SouthNews	501½		1.6	27.5
30½	23	Sterling Pub	25½			50.1
75½	35	Taylor Nelson	57½	- ½	1.8	24.3
260	113	Television Co	191½	+ 1½	1.3	
1433	865	Thomson Corp	1344	- 29	2.4	23.2
505½	342	Trinity Intl	465	- 2	3.0	25.3
278	160½	Ulster TV	167		3.5	16.3
756	665	United News	732½	+ 5½	3.9	22.1
140	55½	VTR	72½		8.2	5.8
273	157	WPP	261½	+ 4	2.8	19.0

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
230½	183½	Jardine Strat	302½		4.5	
172½	98	Johnson Fry	138½	- 2	3.9	5.6
485	405	Leopold J	485		5.0	28.7
503½	328	Liberty Intl	493½	- 7	4.1	28.3
437½	218	Lon Forfaiting	410½	- 2	3.4	15.2
261	205½	London Pacific	226½	- ½	8.0	
117	87½	Lon Scot Bk	108		3.4	18.9
198	139	Man ED & F	198	+ 1	6.5	10.6
1450	1040½	M & G	1447½		3.1	24.5
1418½	841	MAM	1417½	+ 7½	3.4	23.7
178½	90½	Paragon	163½	- 2½	1.8	7.9
2777½	1830	Perpetual	2770		2.6	20.5
612½	395	Provident	587½		3.5	20.0
336	302½	Rathbone Brs	335	+ 1	3.9	14.8
67	49½	Rea Brothers	50½		2.5	19.8

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
64½	37½	Rutland Tst	63½		3.5	12.9
123	42	SEC Group	125	+ 4½	4.8	11.0
457	290	S & U	442½		4.7	11.2
1782½	1185	Schroders	1747½	+ 40	1.3	18.9
1577½	830	Schroders N/V	1532½	+ 35	1.4	17.4
162½	99½	Singer & Fried	162	+ 7½	3.3	11.9
57	33	Towry Law	40			
8	3½	Tro Hldgs	3½			
115½	71	Union	96		3.9	10.3
360	268	Wintrust	335		4.5	15.8

PHARMACEUTICALS

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
360	163½	Brit Biotech	262	+ 7		
945	340	Cantab Pharms	895			
633	441	Celltech	645	- 5		
588	274	Chiroscience	294			
447	149½	Cortecs	231½	+ 1½		
1036	767	Glaxo Well	1358½	+ 39½	3.9	18.9
475	194	ML Laboratories	329½	- 3		60.0
317½	208	Medeva	210	- 2	1.9	
433	175½	Peptide Thera	347½	- 20		
67	24½	Proteus Intl	70	- 5		
929	524	Scotia	635	- 10		
266	179	Shire Pharms	218½	- ½		
36	6½	SkyePharma	67	+ 1½		
947½	629½	SmithKlineB	932	- 10½	2.1	24.6
552	298½	Therp Ach Inc	393			
707½	457½	Vanguard	682½			
360	192	Xenova	353½	- 1½		
1950	1216	Zeneca	1883½	+ 13½	2.1	41.0

PRINTING & PAPER

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
155½	127½	AG Holdings	141		5.3	11.7
782	547	API	730	+ 5	1.9	23.2
140	47½	Apo Holo	56½			
212	149	Arjo Wiggins	195	+ 9½	4.9	16.2
295	87½	Aspen Comm	196		4.0	15.4
29½	12½	Bath Press	19	- ½	3.0	10.5
450½	339	Bemrose	450½		4.1	15.0
229½	129	Blagden	204		1.5	17.3
2725	2037½	Bowater Inc	2522½	+ 34½		
340½	208½	Bowater Intl	320½		1.1	25.3
770	645	Br Polythene	686	- 4	3.4	
38	15½	Br Thornton	15½			
168	121	Bridon	124		3.1	10.6
245½	191	Bunzl	215½	- ½	3.5	13.4
253½	170½	Capital Inds	208½		3.2	14.4
338½	273	Cropper (James)	277½		1.4	13.8
755	526½	De La Rue	615½	+ 6½	4.9	15.7
95	73	Delyn Group	74½		1.4	14.8
224½	131	Dolphin Pack	212½		3.4	17.3
112½	66½	Fairway Group	67		7.8	
267	190	Ferguson Intl	223		7.4	11.8
275	127½	Fodart	147½	- 4	3.0	11.1
177	112	Inveresk	119½		6.3	44.4
310	186½	Jarvis Porter	242½		3.6	14.3
574	397	Low & Bonar	450½		4.2	11.1
127½	60	MY Holdings	127½		2.4	19.5
262	166	Macfarlane	195½	- 1	2.5	16.4
134	89½	Mono	97	+ ½	9.0	7.2
442	282	Photobition	427½	- 7	2.0	21.8
201	156½	Plysu	177½	+ 1	5.2	17.4
47	36	Porter Chadburn	31		1.0	11.2
410	317½	REXAM	330½	+ 6	5.2	16.1
549½	425½	St Ives Gp	547½		2.3	20.1
1047½	465½	Scapa	467½	- 21	4.2	
8	1½	Sem	2½			
148	92	Sidlaw	102½		2.4	
344	241½	Smith David	355½	- 7	3.7	8.6
184	147	Smurfit (Jeff)	160		3.0	5.6
93	74	Sonic	86½		4.3	8.9
294	54	Trace	85½		3.6	9.6
328½	196	Waddington	325½		3.8	16.2
481	273	Watmough	424		2.9	18.4
243	180	Wyndeham	203½	- 1½	2.8	14.6

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
83	62	ORB	65½		..	
33	22	Olives Prop	29½		1.7	21.3
183½	126	PSIT	176½		4.4	18.8
543½	308	Peel	543½	+ 2	1.6	79.0
295	143	Pillar Prop	235		2.6	59.2
47½	27½	Premier Land	28½			
145	113	Quintain	139½		2.2	19.8
29	22	Raglan	23½		5.8	
43	19½	Regalian	40½		2.8	17.3
227½	133	Rowlinson Secs	202½		1.6	10.0
127½	84	Rugby Est	127		2.2	23.2
85	55	St Modwen Prp	81		3.9	
66	50½	Saville Grdn (J)	60	- ½	6.5	15.6
119	52	Savills	115		3.3	13.9
99	70	Scot Met	97		3.5	15.8
194	113	Shaftesbury	187½	+ 1	1.3	30.4
293	192½	Slough Estates	288½	- 1	3.8	22.6
247½	193	Smart (J)	247½		4.7	9.2
120	96	Speyhawk	112		2.7	53.9
87½	53	TBI	85½	+ ½	1.5	25.2
168½	122	Tops Estates	167½	+ 4	1.6	40.9
102½	82½	Town Centre	101		4.3	17.1
145½	97	Trafford Park	143		3.1	19.6
147	84	UK Land	125	- ½	4.0	10.9
84½	42	WSP Group	76½		3.6	16.5
253½	177	Warner	239		6.4	18.7
235	195	Warnford	230½		4.2	17.3
96½	65	Wates	95½			
35	24	Whitney Mick	26			
113½	41	Wood John D	102½		3.7	10.2

RETAILERS, FOOD

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
129½	100½	ASDA Group	110½		3.1	13.0
765	415	Brake Bros	474	+ 1½	2.6	13.2
48½	31	Budgen	44½		3.7	10.7
21½	13½	Cullens	15½		4.0	
69	36	Dairy Farm Intl	47½	- ½	7.8	7.1
487	281	Farepak	485		2.3	17.9
65	44	Fitzwilton	51½		6.1	12.1
120	88½	Fyffes	108½		2.2	
1645	1158	Greggs	1645	+ 125	2.5	
161	73½	Iceland Group	86	+ 2½	7.8	5.2
520	284½	Kwik Save	298½	- 5	8.4	10.1
177	142	Morrison (W)	150	- ½	1.2	13.9
109	46	Park Foods	53½	- 1½	7.0	13.3
12	5½	Regina Hlth	6½			
438	234	Safeway	367	+ 1	4.5	14.2
425	307	Sainsbury J	316½	- 1	4.8	13.0
179	145½	Somerfield	175	- 1	6.4	6.8
371½	251	Tesco	347	+ 7½	3.5	15.4
236½	133	Thorntons	236	+ ½	2.9	
575	335½	Watson& Philip	481	+ 13½	4.7	13.0

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
188½	81	Alexon	188½			20.8
248	135½	Allders	167		4.8	
320	228	Allied Carpets	287½	+ 1	1.1	23.9
799	588	Argos	677½	- 1½	2.8	24.3
220½	135	Ashley (Laura)	156½		0.7	45.6
246	150	Austin Reed	244½	+ 4½	3.2	26.5
164½	126	Beattie (J)	152½	+ 3½	5.6	15.8
133½	95	Beckalls	125½		2.2	36.0
129	67	Bellerway	99	- ½	3.5	13.6
447½	49½	Blacks Leis	435½	+ ½	0.8	28.4
224½	141	Body Shop	190½		2.5	17.9
706½	550	Boots	678½	+ 6½	3.5	18.1
28	11½	Brown & Jackson	13½			
452½	353	Brown (N)	406½		1.9	25.6
162½	125	Burton	155½	- ½	2.3	20.0
658	420	Carpetright	615		3.4	24.2
333½	186	Christies Int	310	- 4½	1.4	30.2
530	363	Church	530		3.5	18.8
255	111	Clinton Cards	251		2.6	17.5
181	63	C'ity Casuals	93½	+ 1	2.3	11.4
545	399½	Courts Furnisht	540		0.7	23.0
656	381	DFS Furniture	608½	+ 13½	2.1	30.8
587½	403½	Dixons Grp	530½	+ 3½	2.1	20.0
25½	9½	Elec Boutique	24½			
9½	3½	ERA Gp	4	+ ½	3.1	
116	52	Essex Furn	89½	- 2	6.1	
205	120	Etam	134½		1.2	
531	211	Fine Art Dev	291		7.1	9.3
155½	86	Fired Earth	150½		1.7	20.3
280½	128	Flying Flw Ult	266½	- 13½	1.9	
126	58	Forminster	83		1.8	
315	143	French Conn	313		1.0	30.2
195	88	Frost Group	127½	- 3	6.9	16.3
83	46½	Gieves	50½		5.6	11.8
404½	194	Goldsmiths Gp	397½		1.8	24.0
770	579	GUS	652½	- 3	3.3	17.1
303½	100	H&C Furnishing	303½	+ 2½	1.6	40.7
440	301	Hamleys	355	+ 1	3.0	17.8
110	74½	Hampden Gp	85		3.1	12.1
190	134½	Hse of Fraser	161	+ 2	4.3	43.7
81½	49½	Hughes (TJ)	79	+ ½	4.3	18.9
400	190	JJB Sports	399	+ 6½	1.1	35.8
695	504	Kingfisher	686½	+ 4½	3.0	19.7
322½	165	Kingsbury Grp	166	- 20	2.8	11.3
445	275	Liberty	372½		0.8	
200	162½	Limelight	168½	- 3	3.5	17.6
527½	258	Lloyds Chem	524½	- ½	2.5	19.7

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
289½	140½	MFI	157	- 2	3.7	15.2
533	416½	Marks Spencer	460½	+ 2½		
635	445	Menzies (John)	470½		3.7	12.2
70½	15½	Merchant Retail	24½			23.9
1410	635	Moss Bros	1405	- 5	1.7	23.6
620½	423	Next	620½	+ 7½	2.6	25.6
63	30½	Olver (G)	31½			
556	400	Oriflame Intl	502½		3.1	15.4
	66	Partridge Fine	73½		5.4	14.0
	28½	QS Hldgs	38		5.1	
	191	Rosebys	327½		3.1	
105	78½	Sears	81½	- ½	6.1	66.4
34½	14½	Signet Group	37½			
534	339	Smith WH	461½	- 6½	4.2	
1110	820	Sothebys	1042½		7.4	
362	245½	Storehouse	274½	+ ½	4.5	18.3
157	90	Stylo	128		4.7	19.2
231	166½	T & S Stores	176½		5.2	11.3
410	187½	Thorn	194		9.3	14.1
189½	159	Tie Rack	187		1.9	15.6
4	2½	Upton & South	3½			35.9
664	481½	Vendome	529½	+ 14	2.4	19.6
29½	17	WEW Group	23			
859½	151	Wickes	153	- 7½		
94	52	Wld of Leather	87½		2.4	
362½	198	Wyevale	261½	+ 1	3.0	

SUPPORT SERVICES

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1550	883	ADT	1325			
510	314½	AEA Tech	510	+ 12		
135	92	Alpha Airpts	106		5.9	13.6
43½	26	Alphament	40	+ ½		15.5
367½	215	Atlas WS	343½		2.3	25.3
190	139	BRS Res	183½	+ 1	4.6	9.9
437½	283	BPP	435		3.3	21.2
203	155	BSM	159½		4.1	
637½	203	BTG	630½	+ 1½	0.8	
110½	80	Books Service	87½	- 1	4.5	13.7
510	373	Business Post	501½			
1180	329	CMG	1170	+ 15	0.6	
276½	111½	CRT Grp	231½	+ ½		
	187	Card Gp	677½	+ 10	0.6	12.9
	295	Capita Group	710	+ 14½	3.8	
	5½	Chemex	7½		2.6	17.9
434½	308	Cobb Sec	431½	+ 3	3.5	21.0
256	92	Corp Services	196	+ 4	3.3	
59½	46	Coats Crostg	57	- 1½	4.7	12.3
346	73	DCS Gp	300½		0.6	37.9
376½	202½	Davis Service	347			
910	387	Delphi	920		0.5	
252	98	Dudley Jenkins	229½		2.1	21.6
82	38	EW Fact	75½	- 1	2.7	11.0
116	59½	El Data Prct	84½	- 1	3.3	12.7
600	245	FI Group	560	- 1½	1.0	45.3
578½	362	Hays	524½	- 3½	2.0	
313½	203½	Hogg Robinson	202½		5.5	
725	360	JBA Hldgs	785	+ 9	0.7	46.0
311	253	Johnson Clean	286½	- 1	4.3	13.0
149	101½	Kalamazoo	110	- 2½	4.8	11.3
622	351	Kewill Sys	601½		1.9	36.4
41	17	Laser-Scan	29½	+ ½		
250½	145½	Lavendon	250	+ 7½	1.7	19.5
130	90	Leigh	111½	- ½	4.4	
1042½	452	Logica	1042½		1.0	35.4
115½	68	Lynx Hldgs	109		2.8	20.3
52	30½	LEDS	52½	- ½	2.8	
632	245	MMT Comp	580		1.9	25.1
1045	66	MR Group	90½		5.7	16.0
520	398	Macro 4	412½		2.5	11.4
97½	47½	Mcmmoree Abbey	49½		1.5	
1340	553	Micro Focus	1170	- 42½		
190	141	Micropen	172½		5.7	11.4
1232½	570	Misys	1293½	- 3½	1.1	27.4
204½	124	MITIE Grp	192½		1.3	27.9
41	30½	Nova Group	34		5.5	9.4
49½	29½	Orbis	42		2.9	14.8
230½	127	P & P	223½	- 1½	2.0	17.6
553½	188	Page (Michael)	551		2.1	17.3
535	173	Parity	526	- 2½	1.0	
453	200	Pegasus	377		2.0	25.3
	79	Penna	145		1.7	

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
140	110	Lambert	130	- 1	6.8	12.9
325	165	Lamont	167½		9.6	18.8
276	120	Leeds	163	- 1	5.1	13.8
58	34½	Leslie Wise Gp	36		10.2	9.1
62	44	Lyles (S)	56		1.7	
27	9½	Marling	12½		5.8	10.9
9½	4½	PEX	7½			
207½	164	Parkland	190½	- 1	4.1	8.5
120	86	Pentland	102		4.1	21.7
89	51	Pittards	84½	- ½	3.3	
69½	41	Readicut	42½	- ½	10.1	13.0
68	35	Richards	35	- 3½	7.1	
64	34½	SEET	53½			49.8
133	38	Sherwood Gp	43½		10.3	6.1
132½	83	Shiloh	131½		3.7	14.1
97	63	Sirdar	71½		9.6	10.9
61	32½	Stirling Gp	34		8.1	8.2
26	13½	UK Safety	15½		6.5	
224	161	Usher (Frank)	192½		7.3	10.3
133	77½	Wensum	88½		7.1	8.1
335	180½	Yorklyde	180½		5.5	10.0

TRANSPORT

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
250	107	Air London	225		3.3	14.7
760½	375	All Nippon Air	408	- 5½	0.4	
319½	260	Assoc Br Ports	296½	- 3	3.3	15.9
555	447	BAA	597½	- 2½	2.7	16.9
672	464	Br Airways	661	- 3	2.7	12.1
17	5½	Central Tran R	9½			
113	95	Clarkson (H)	109½		3.9	3.2
176	122½	Clydeport Ops	158½		3.5	11.5
444	276½	Cowie	432½	+ ½	3.1	14.9
293	214	Dart	247½		3.1	13.8
117	82	Eurotunnel Uts	78	- ½		
256	139½	FirstBus	231	- ½	2.8	16.6
150	77½	Fisher (James)	145		1.7	14.4
880	525	Forth Ports	855		2.3	21.8
518½	277	Go-Ahead	518½	+ 1	1.4	20.1
456½	248	Goode Durrant	448½	+ 1	2.5	16.1
588	405	Irish Cont	550		1.0	
92½	65	Jacobs	91½		7.8	31.4
98	64½	Lon O'Seas Frts	80½		0.8	17.0
456	345	Mersey Docks	437½	+ 27½	3.7	18.8
200	140	NFC	166½	- 1½	5.3	17.9
581	362	Natl Express	520	+ 4½	2.5	14.0
500	372	Ocean Group	485½	- 6½	4.0	16.9
100	75½	Ocean Wilson	87½		5.7	6.9
682	487	P & O Dfd	670	- 7	5.7	17.9
183	101	P & O 5.5%	123½	- 1½	5.6	
500	205	Railtrack (P/P)	494	+ 3	3.8	15.3
67	44	Seacont	44		6.2	20.3
505	230	Servisair	472½		1.2	48.9
801	317½	Stagecoach	755	+ 22½	1.3	32.6
115½	67	TLS	110½		3.3	14.3
672½	390	Tibbet & Britn	590		3.5	22.3
229	167½	TDG	200		6.1	12.2
81	60	Ugland	69		8.6	7.7
106	74	Utd Carriers	88		4.5	

WATER

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
658	512	Anglian	655½		6.0	7.9
840	656	Hyder	832½		6.1	11.4
108	36	Hyder Cm Prf	106½		9.2	
640	420	Mid Kent Hdgs	580		6.6	9.3
734½	518	Severn Trent	734½	+ 6	5.7	8.1
2920	2375	South Staffs	2900		3.5	14.4
731	489	South West	697½	+ 5	5.8	7.8
698½	536½	Thames	688½		5.5	8.9
697	539	Utd Utilities	670	+ 3½	6.4	12.1
394	295	Wessex	371½		5.3	7.4
395½	290	Yorkshire	378½	+ 2½	5.9	9.0

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
107½	18	Abacus Recruit	105½	+ 5	0.6	20.3
213	95	Cafe Inns	192½		1.6	14.8
185½	58	Country Gdns	181½	- 1	1.0	18.7
2550	860	Dawson Hdgs	2512½		2.0	19.3
51½	14	Freepages	48½			
117	88½	Megalomedia	90			50.5
475	22½	Memory Corp	50			
239½	85½	Old English Pub	221½	+ 1½	0.8	69.6
590	191	Prism Rail	375			
1265	370	Ramco Egy	1150		0.1	
755	520	Southern News	754	+ 2	3.0	24.3
79½	50	Southern Vectis	67½		3.5	14.5
496	122	Surrey Fr Inast	475	+ 29	0.7	32.9
79½	33½	Trocadero	38½			

Source: FI Information

Price at suspension. † Ex dividend. ‡ Ex scrip. ▲ Ex rights issue. ▼ Ex all. § Ex capital distribution. * Figures or report awaited. .. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 1997	[illegible]		6.97	6.01
[illegible]	100	Exch 10½% 1997	[illegible]		10.19	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 1997	[illegible]		8.64	6.05
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 15% 1997	[illegible]		14.13	6.04
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 9¾% 1998	[illegible]		9.47	6.18
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 1998	[illegible]		7.18	6.29
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 1995-98	[illegible]		6.88	6.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	[illegible]		13.69	6.44
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12% 1998	[illegible]		11.04	6.48
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	[illegible]		9.04	6.49
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	[illegible]		11.06	6.58
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	[illegible]		9.74	6.53
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	[illegible]		6.07	6.56
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	[illegible]		9.44	6.68
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	[illegible]		8.50	6.75
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	[illegible]		7.71	6.81
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	[illegible]		11.00	6.82
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	[illegible]		9.05	6.91
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	[illegible]		6.98	6.92

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	[illegible]		8.72	7.08
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	[illegible]		7.65	7.07
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	[illegible]		8.73	7.13
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11½% 2001-04	[illegible]		9.94	6.96
[illegible]	[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	[illegible]		4.10	5.94
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	[illegible]		8.39	7.20
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	[illegible]		[illegible]	7.17
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	[illegible]		[illegible]	7.27
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	[illegible]		8.37	7.27
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	[illegible]		[illegible]	7.19
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7½% 2006	[illegible]		7.40	7.29
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	[illegible]		7.54	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	[illegible]		7.79	7.19
125	115	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	121	-	9.65	7.14
110	101	Treas 8½% 2007	108	+	7.84	7.32
114	103	Treas 9% 2008	112	+	8.00	7.38
106	96	Treas 8% 2009	104	-	7.65	7.43

LONGS (over 15 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
91½	81½	Treas 6¼% 2010	89	+	6.98	7.48
115	104	Conv 9% 2011	113	+	7.94	7.47
116	104	Treas 9% 2012	113	+	7.91	7.48
85	75½	Treas 5½% 2008-12	83	-	6.57	7.25
107	96½	Treas 8% 2013	104	+	7.65	7.50
104	93	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	101	-	7.61	7.53
107	95	Treas 8% 2015	105	+	7.60	7.47
115	102	Treas 8¾% 2017	112	+	7.76	7.52
108	95	Tr 8% 2021	105	+	7.55	7.47

UNDATED

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
47	41	War Ln 3½%	45		7.80	..
33	29	Treas 2½%	32	..	7.65	
54	46	Consols 4%	51	+ ½	7.71	

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of.

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	10%	5%
114½	111	Treas IL 4⅝% 1998	114	-	..	1.66
187	176	Treas IL 2% 2001	186	-	2.62	3.21
184	171	Treas IL 2½% 2003	182	-	2.85	3.29
120	112	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	118	...	2.92	3.30
195	179	Treas IL 2% 2006	183	-	3.05	3.34
176	161	Treas IL 2½% 2009	173	+	3.16	3.40
183	166	Treas IL 2½% 2011	180		3.23	3.44
150	136	Treas IL 2½% 2013	148		3.28	3.47
161	145	Treas IL 2½% 2016	158		3.33	3.50
154	138	Treas IL 2½% 2020	151	+	3.40	3.55
128	115	Treas IL 2½% 2024	125		3.42	3.55
126	113	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	123	†	3.42	3.55

p

THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

arclays graduates to computer service

Barclays Bank has included a PC banking service as part of its new graduate package to be launched on Monday. The banking service will enable graduates to make transactions via modem and is suitable for all IBM compatible PCs. Customers can also check balances, set up standing orders and pay bills. Barclays PC Banking will be available from July 1 and will be free for three months. Call 0800 000097 to apply.

■ Portman Building Society is giving savers nationwide the chance to open three of its accounts by mail. Until now, only those residing within the society's operating area could invest with Portman. The accounts are: Instant Access (minimum deposit and maintained balance £500), One Year Fixed Interest Bond (£2,500), Five Year Step-Up Bond (£2,500). Interest rates are 4.70 per cent, 6.30 per cent and 7.70 per cent respectively. Customers within the society's catchment area can open an Instant Access branch account with just £100. For details call 0800 807080.

■ Seeking advice on financial affairs is an important consideration many people overlook when moving abroad, according to Midland Offshore. Two free guides will be offered to anyone attending Midland Offshore's stand at the Emigration & Jobs Abroad Show being held at Olympia Exhibition Centre today and tomorrow. Midland's *Country Guide* provides information on tax and economics in 77 countries. *The Midland Offshore Tax Guide* highlights the financial impact of living overseas. Further copies of the *Tax Guide* are available by calling 01534 616111.

■ Peps, Enterprise Zones, Enterprise Investment Schemes, and Tessas are all covered in a new 12-page guide from the David Aaron Partnership. *Making the Most of Year End Tax Planning* considers a variety of opportunities that are available to investors and which must be put into place before April 5. There is also a section on how best to invest for children to take advantage of tax breaks. For a free copy, write to the David Aaron Partnership, Shelton House, High Street, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, MK17 8SD.

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sainsbury's Bank 0500 405060	Instant Access	Instant	£1	5.75	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Inst	Postal	£5,000	6.35	Yly
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Instant Postal	Postal	£10,000	6.40	Yly
Stroud & Swindon BS 0800 618161	Direct Instant	Postal	£50,000	6.60	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Chelsea BS 0800 132351	POST-tel 20	20 day p	£5,000	6.05	Yly
First National BS 0800 558844	30 Day Notice	30 day p	£10,000	6.30	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day p	£10,000	6.50	Yly
Birmingham Midshires 0500 070707	First Class 90	90 day p	£10,000	6.55	Yly

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Abbey National 0800 100801	Fxd+feeder a/c	5 year	£9,000	7.50	F/Yly
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fxd+feeder a/c	5 year	£8,575	7.50	F/Yly
Holmesdale BS 01737 245716		5 year	£2,500	7.00	Yly
West Bromwich BS 0990 143668		5 year	£3,000	7.00	Yly

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.64%NC	7.90%N	Nil
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.79%N	9.90%N	Nil
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.797%N	9.90%N	Nil

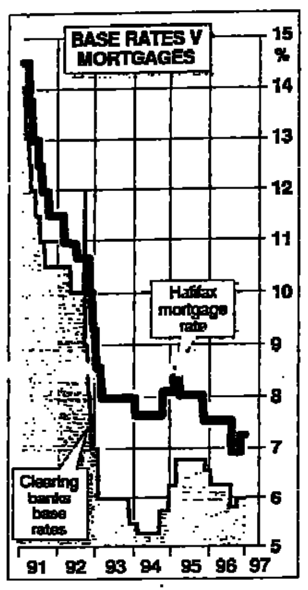
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

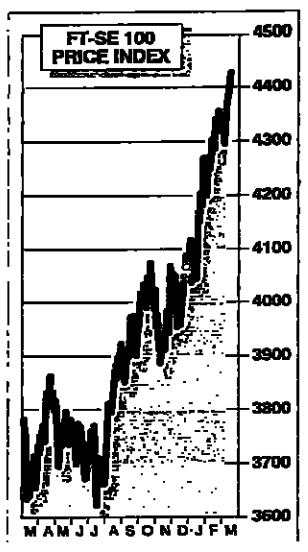
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	12.90%H	£112.66	£102.59
Lombard Direct 0800 215000	13.90%A	£120.02	£101.20
RBS Direct 0800 121125	14.00%	£114.78	£101.45

Nb. A = APR dependent on credit rating, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable), H = Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, P = By Post only

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)





NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c[1]	1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*[6]	4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500**[7]	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*[6]	6.00	4.80	3.60	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond[4]	6.00	4.80	3.60	1,000-20,000**		0645 645000
43rd Issue Cert†[5]	5.35			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.75			25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bond[3][6]	6.65	5.32	3.99	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
9th Index Linked†[3]	2.50			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S3[6]	7.00	5.60	4.20	500-50,000[5]	60day	0645 645000

[1] first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, inst aces for up to £100 [2] Additional hldgs up to £20,000 for reinvested proceeds †Tax free [3] Rates gross and vble ‡Guaranteed when held for 5 years [4] 0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ [5] £100,000 jt in addition to S1 and S2 holdings [6] Taxable but cred in full [7] £500-100,000 earn higher rates. **Tiered rates apply

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Canada Life ....Level	£ 9,574	£10,658	£12,134
Royal Sun All ....Level	£ 9,429	£10,573	£12,122
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£ 9,508	£10,557	£11,987
Sun Life ....Level	£ 9,421	£10,536	£12,044
Generali ....Level	£ 9,479	£10,523	£11,883

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential ....Level	£8,939	£ 9,745	£10,931
Canada Life ....Level	£8,874	£ 9,686	£10,874
Norwich Union .....Level	£8,838	£ 9,598	£10,708
Royal Sun All ....Level	£8,693	£ 9,543	£10,785
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£8,761	£ 9,510	£10,607

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 Female: Age 55	Age 65 Age 60	Age 70 Age 65
Canada Life ....Level	£8,650	£9,385	£10,443
Stalwart* ....Level	£8,318	£9,011	£ 9,794
Prudential ....Level	£8,460	£8,994	£ 9,814
Norwich Union .....Level	£8,398	£8,968	£ 9,778
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£8,379	£8,962	£ 9,789

* Maximum purchase £100,000. Higher rates for smokers.
Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 9393)

Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at March 6, 1997

Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year		
1,000	Hambro Assured	4.05
5,000	GE Fin Assur	5.30
10,000	Hambro Assured	5.50
20,000	Hambro Assured	5.70
2 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	4.80
3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	5.80
20,000	GE Fin Assur	5.90
50,000	GE Fin Assur	5.95
3 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.05
3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	6.05
4 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.50
3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	6.35
5 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.60
3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	6.50

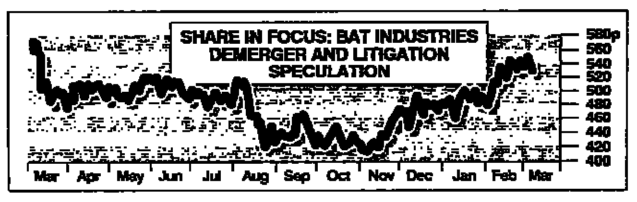
Source: Chamberlain de Broë 0171-434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	108.12	8.655	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	132.32	8.786	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	147.88	8.791	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	152.98	8.743	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	147.88	8.791	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	139.13	8.678	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	130.50	9.004	100.25	10,000
Halifax	8.750%	103.74	8.434	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	138.49	8.311	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.625%	159.81	8.526	100.00	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	154.21	8.674	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	125.06	8.573	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	145.81	8.658	100.45	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	146.94	8.592	100.14	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	148.47	8.672	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (28/09-27/03)	8.41563%	111.50	100.00	1,000
First Nat(20/09-20/03)	8.48750%	101.50	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares
Source: ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101


SHARE IN FOCUS: BAT INDUSTRIES DEMERGER AND LITIGATION SPECULATION

LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Alliance & Leic 0800 412214	4.25	to £250k	90	Disc of 3% to 1.5.98
Woolwich 0181 2985831	4.29	£20-200k	50	3% disc 12 mth, plus 3% cshback
Nationwide 0800 302010	3.09	to £500k	75	3.90% discount for 12 mths
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc-6mth, 3% disc-6 mths
Royal Bank of Scot 0131 523 4442	4.25	£150-250k	75	3% discount to 1.10.97

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Scarborough 0800 590547	0.25	£30-100k	95	6.99% dsc-6mth, 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Nottingham Imper. 0115 9817220	0.75	£25-150k	75	Fixed at 0.75% to 31.1.98
Hinckley & Rugby 0800 774499	1.25	£1-150k	80	6% discount for 12 months
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50%dsc-6 mth 3% dsc-6 mth
Midland Bank 0800 494999	4.15	£50-100k	95	3% discount for 1 year

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Bristol & West 0800 119955	3.50	£15k+	95	3.75% discount for 12 mths
Newbury 01635 43676	3.99	£15-150k	95	3% discount for 12 mths
Woolwich 0181 2985831	5.29	£20-200k	95	2% discount for 12 mths
Banks				
Bnk of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 mths
TSB Bank 0500 758000	3.51	£15k+	95	3.74% disc for 12 months

Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides Ltd (01753 880482)

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UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AEGON LIFE ASSURANCE Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh. EH12 9SE 0131 339 9191				
Balanced	546.40	578.30	+ 3.70	..
UK Equity	735.90	778.80	+ 6.90	..
Property	427.80	452.70	+ 0.50	.
Fixed Interest	368.20	389.70	- 2.00	...
Money	272.10	288.00	+ 0.30	...
International	432.30	457.50	+ 4.40	..
ABBEY LIFE Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8AL 01202 292373				
Custodian S4	200.80	211.40	- 0.20	..
Ethical S4	173.70	182.90	+ 0.50	..
International S4	223.90	235.70	+ 1.30	
Protected Gth S4	125.50	132.20	...	0
Asian Pacific	218.60	230.20	+ 0.30	...
European S4	232.70	245.00	+ 5.70	...
Prop Fd Ser 4	404.80	426.20	+ 0.20	...
Equity Ser 4	289.30	304.60	+ 3.90	.
Man Ser 4	814.60	857.50	+ 6.10	...
Conv Ser 4	357.40	376.30	+ 0.30	..
Money Ser 4	357.10	375.90	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Int Ser 4	406.30	427.70	- 2.90	.
American Ser 4	717.80	755.60	+10.70	...
High Inc Ser 4	879.70	926.10	+12.30	..
Indexed Inv Ser 4	234.50	246.90	- 1.70	.
Japan Ser 4	278.50	293.20	- 4.20	..
ALBANY LIFE 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AJ 01707 42311				
Equity Fd Acc	2080.40	2189.80	+29.00	...
European Fd Acc	514.10	541.10	+11.40	...
Fixed Int Acc	582.00	612.60	- 5.00	...
Gtd Money Acc	363.40	382.50	+ 0.30	...
Intl Managed Acc	762.90	803.00	+ 9.90	..
Int Fxd Int Acc	375.10	394.80	+ 0.30	.
Japan Fund	218.90	230.40	- 1.90	..
N American Acc	458.20	482.30	+ 9.90	..
Prop Fd Acc	482.10	507.50	- 0.50	...
Multiple Inv Acc	1288.90	1356.70	+13.00	...
ALLIED DUNBAR ASSURANCE Swindon SN1 1EL 01793 514514				
Fxd Int Dep Acc	408.20	429.70	+ 0.50	..
Equity Acc	1821.40	1917.30	+25.80	
Property Acc	671.30	706.70	+ 0.90	.
Far East Acc	329.50	346.90	- 1.40	
Managed Capital	640.00	673.70	+ 5.50	.
-do- Acc	1378.50	1451.10	+11.50	.
Overseas Acc	1273.90	1341.00	+21.90	
Gilt Edged Acc	569.30	599.30	- 6.00	.
Amer Equity Acc	1216.20	1280.30	+25.10	.
Amer Man Acc	507.00	533.70	+ 8.90	
Amer Prop Acc	121.10	127.50	+ 1.30	
Distribution Bonds	25.70	27.10	+ 0.10	
AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE ASSURANCE Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Bucks 01494 463463				
Reserve Ser 6	181.00	190.50	+ 0.10	
Balced Ser 6	901.30	948.70	+12.20	..
Opportunity Ser 6	206.30	217.10	+ 3.00	
Distribution Ser 6	106.50	112.10	+ 0.20	6.52
UK Equities Ser 6	£13.34	£14.04	+25.50	
Higher Inc Ser 6	£13.64	£14.36	+22.10	
North Amer Ser 6	611.80	644.00	+ 8.90	
Far East Ser 6	561.40	590.90	+ 0.90	..
Europe Ser 6	522.50	550.00	+11.70	..
Intnl Ser 6	693.90	730.40	+ 9.00	
Property Ser 6	614.40	646.70	+ 0.70	...
Fixed Int Ser 6	505.30	531.90	.	..
Ind-Lnkd Sec S6	204.70	215.40	- 1.70	
Gteed Dep Ser 6	325.00	342.10	+ 0.40	...
BARCLAYS LIFE 252 Romford Road, London E7 9JB 0181 534 5544				
Equity Acc	1147.50	1207.90	+17.10	..
-do- Initial	701.50	738.40	+10.50	..
Gilt Edged Acc	452.60	476.50	- 4.10	..
-do- Initial	278.70	293.40	- 2.60	..
International Acc	475.90	499.90	+ 3.60	..
-do- Initial	290.00	305.30	+ 2.40	..
Managed Acc	664.30	699.30	+ 6.40	
-do- Initial	407.00	429.60	+ 3.90	
Money Acc	317.30	334.00	+ 0.30	.
Property Acc	324.90	342.00	+ 0.30	
-do- Initial	198.80	209.30	...	..
America Acc	413.60	435.40	+ 5.40	..
Far East Gwth	269.00	283.20	- 0.20	...
Financial Acc	506.20	532.90	+ 9.00	.
500 Accum	560.10	589.60	+ 2.70	..
Japan Acc	220.70	232.40	- 4.50	...
Income Acc	677.40	713.10	+11.40	
Leisure Acc	343.30	361.40	+ 2.00	
Special Sits Acc	351.00	370.20	+ 5.00	
Unit Tech Acc	194.10	204.40	- 2.20	...
BLACK HORSE LIFE Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent ME4 4JF 01634 834000				
The Managed Fd	£10.02	£10.02	+ 5.61	.
Income Fund	957.10	£10.07	+13.06	...
Extra Income	963.12	998.55	+11.26	
Worldwide Gth	567.01	596.86	+ 1.84	
Balanced Fund	857.70	902.84	+ 4.08	.
Smllr Cos Recvn	£11.17	£11.76	+ 2.35	...
N Amer & Genrl	499.50	525.79	- 2.72	..
Pacific Basin	451.61	475.38	- 0.12	.
German Growth	279.57	294.29	-10.57	...
Japan Growth	143.99	151.47	- 3.62	
The UK Gilt Fd	278.32	293.18	+ 2.06	.
Contl Euro Gth	179.93	189.40	+ 3.37	.
Property Fund	429	451.58	- 0.95	...
Fixed Interest	370.55	390.00	- 2.56	..
Cash Fund	308.44	324.69	+ 0.24	...
Managed Inv	596.14	627.53	+ 7.44	.
Nth Amer Recvn	314.11	330.65	- 2.06	..
Abtrust Fund				
Managed Grth	546.74	575.14	+ 0.45	
BRITANNIA 50 Bothwell St, Glasgow G2 6HR 0141 248 2000				
Measured Perf	210.30	222.20	+ 2.60	
Performance Plus	243.00	257.10	- 2.20	...
With Profit Perf	198.51	210.90	+ 0.30	...
UK Opportunity	271.30	287.00	+ 1.20	...
Euro Opportunity	295.20	310.20	+ 4.60	...
North Amer Opp	260.80	276.00	+ 5.50	...
Far East Opp	207.80	219.80	- 3.10	.
Gwth Prop Ser 1	176.80	186.20	...	..
Gth Prop Ser 2	213.40	225.40	+ 1.80	..
Fixed Int	235.30	248.90	- 2.00	...
Cash	172.50	182.40	+ 0.10	6.49
Overseas	280.10	296.40	- 3.60	...
Formerly LAS				
Managed Fund	439.80	463.00	+ 1.20	.
UK Equity	820.60	863.80	+ 3.60	..
Property	294.60	310.20	+ 2.40	...
Money Market	273.30	287.70	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Interest	341.80	359.80	- 2.90	...
Japan	288.10	303.30	- 6.30	..
North America	232.10	244.40	+ 4.90	...
International	432.80	455.60	- 5.60	...
European	374.90	394.70	+ 5.90	...
Far East	153.90	162.00	- 2.30	...
CANADA LIFE 2-6 High Street, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5BA 01707 51122				
Managed	415.40	437.30	+ 4.00	...
Property	269.60	283.80	+ 0.40	...
Gilt & Fxd Int	278.30	293.00	- 1.60	...
Equity	505.30	531.90	+ 8.20	.
Cash	232.70	245.00	+ 0.10	
CLife Euro Mgd	486.10	511.70	+ 9.40	..
CLife Intl Fd	392.50	413.20	+ 0.30	...
Managed Fund	886.90	933.60	+ 8.60	..
Property Fund	565.00	594.70	+ 1.10	..
Equity Fund	1247.00	1312.60	+20.20	..
Gilt Edged Fd	717.90	755.70	- 4.10	..
Deposit Fund	361.20	380.20	..	...
Investment Fd	550.70	579.70	+14.50	..
International	624.70	657.60	- 0.50	
CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE Sentry House, 500 Avebury Blvd. Milton Keynes MK9 2NU. 01908 606101				
Property Fund	172.90	182.00	...	..
Managed Fund	797.70	839.70	+ 6.00	..
Equity Fund	480.30	505.60	+ 6.30	
CLERICAL MEDICAL/FIDELITY INVESTMENTS Narrow Plain, Bristol BS2 0JH. 0117 9290566				
Assurance Funds				
Sapphire Mixed	359.50	378.50	+ 4.00	..
Ruby	209.10	220.30	+ 1.30	
Emerald	162.70	171.30	- 0.90	.
Equity	435.60	458.60	+ 7.80	...
Property	244.10	257.00	+ 0.30	.
Gilt & Fixed Int	237.00	249.50	- 1.70	..
Indexed Secs	188.00	198.00	- 1.40	.
Cash	203.50	214.30	+ 0.10	...
Nth American	329.50	346.90	+ 7.20	.
Far East	292.10	307.40	- 3.00	...
International	286.80	301.90	+ 3.60	...
Special Sits	481.90	507.30	- 0.10	...
Intl Income	389.60	410.10	+ 6.00	
European	439.70	462.90	+10.10	
Japanese	110.10	115.90	- 1.40	
SE Asia	425.90	448.40	+ 3.20	...
With Profits Reg	189.30	199.30	+ 0.20	..
-do- Spec	189.30	199.30	+ 0.20	..
Flexible Retirement Plans Funds				
Mixed	425.40	447.80	+ 5.70	.
Equity	546.20	575.00	+10.60	...
Property	230.00	242.20	+ 0.10	..
Gilt & Fixed Int	308.40	324.70	- 2.00	.
Index Linked	202.10	212.80	- 1.30	
Cash	279.30	294.10	+ 0.30	.
Nth American	413.70	435.50	+ 8.60	...
Far East Acc	299.50	315.30	- 0.80	..
International Acc	364.50	383.70	+ 5.00	.
Special Sits	728.10	766.50	- 0.30	.
European Flex	645.80	679.80	+15.70	.
COLONIAL MUTUAL GROUP Colonial Mutual House, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4YY. 01634 890 000				
(Unit) Key 1	250.95			
-do- Pacemaker 1	381.74	...		
-do- Cash	219.14	230.67	+ 0.14	
-do- Equity	698.40	735.68	+11.83	.
-do- Fxd Int	418.38	440.40	- 2.41	
-do- Managed	496.04	522.15	+ 6.91	..
-do- Property	374.97	394.71	+ 2.43	...
(Pens) Cash Cap	215.74	227.11	+ 0.07	..
-do- Cash Inv	341.80	359.80	+ 0.35	...
-do- Equity Cap	£18.42	£19.39	+32.58	...
-do- Equity Inv	£29.19	£30.72	+53.66	..
-do- Fixed Cap	449.89	473.58	- 4.11	..
-do- Fixed Inv	712.74	750.27	- 6.11	
-do- Index Cap	215.72	226.08	- 2.15	
-do- Index Inv	341.15	359.10	- 3.16	.
-do- Mngd Cap	726.73	764.99	+10.61	..
-do- Mngd Inv	£11.51	£12.11	+17.61	...
COMMERCIAL UNION St Helen's, 1 Undershaft, EC3 0171 283 7500				
Var Ann Acc (9) 1	£10.18		+ 2.75	..
Var Ann (9) 1	314.79		+ 0.46	..
Prime Managed	499.20	525.50	+ 6.10	
Prime UK Equity	649.90	684.20	+10.70	...
Prime Intl Equity	347.40	365.50	+ 3.70	.
Prime Property	254.20	267.60	+ 0.20	
Prime Fxd Int	267.20	281.30	- 1.20	...
Prime Index-Lnk	180.50	190.50	- 1.30	...
Prime Cash	223.50	235.30	+ 0.30	.
CONFEDERATION LIFE Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2NN 01438 744840				
Managed Fund	1354.60	1425.90	+ 7.10	...
Equity II	2027.00	2133.60	+18.50	...
For Crown see Windsor				
EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE Montpellier Drive, Cheltenham, GL53 7LQ. 01242 221311				
Life Funds				
UT Wth Pfts (5)(4) 1	112.00	.	+ 0.10	...
Secure (2) 1	107.70		+ 0.10	.
Managed (4) 1	122.10	.	+ 1.20	..
Equity Mngd (3) 1	122.40	...	+ 1.40	...
Adventurous (3) 1	114.20		+ 1.30	
Bristol & West (2) 1	108.90	..	+ 0.10	.
Equity Mgd S1	300.20	316.10	+ 3.60	...
Managed S1	298.50	314.30	+ 3.00	...
Adventurous S1	238.20	250.80	+ 4.00	
Managed (2)	200.90	211.50	+ 2.00	.
Pension Funds				
Unit With Pfts (5) 1	111.20	...	+ 0.20	...
Secure (2) 1	107.50	.	+ 0.10	...
Managed (2) 1	119.80	..	+ 1.40	.
Equity Mngd (2) 1	121.40	...	+ 1.70	...
Adventurous (2) 1	112.80	...	+ 2.30	...
Bristol & West (2) 1	109.80	...	+ 0.20	...
EAGLE STAR/MIDLAND 60 St Mary Axe, London EC3. 0171 929 1111				
Eagle/Mld Uts	384.60	398.50	+ 5.70	0.01
FRIENDS' PROVIDENT Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SH 01722 413366				
Managed	391.10	411.70	+ 3.70	...
UK Equity	546.30	575.10	+ 6.70	...
Stewardship	491.60	517.50	+ 2.10	...
Overseas Equity	357.10	375.90	+ 3.60	...
North American	217.70	229.20	+ 2.80	...
Pacific Basin	177.50	186.90	+ 0.40	...
European	340.50	358.50	+ 8.20	...
Property	187.20	197.10	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Interest	277.80	292.50	- 2.30	...
Index Linked	190.30	200.40	- 1.40	
Cash	219.00	230.60	+ 0.20	
FP Life Assurance ex NM				
Fixed Interest	615.60	648.00	- 3.00	
Managed	868.00	913.60	+10.60	...
Deposit	374.30	394.00	+ 0.50	.
Property	531.00	558.90	+ 0.60	...
American	594.40	625.60	+ 8.30	..
Australian	679.20	714.90	+20.00	..
European	796.70	838.60	+20.90	...
Income Acc	959.20	1009.60	+14.90	..
-do- Dist	530.30	558.50	+10.30	4.77
International	374.70	394.40	+ 4.00	..
Japan Smaller	347.60	365.90	- 6.30	..
Singapore & Mal	442.40	465.60	+ 3.30	..
Smaller Cos	545.10	573.70	+12.60	.
Tokyo Fund	540.40	568.90	- 4.00	..
UK Equity	749.90	789.30	+12.00	
CCM Mangd Mg	931.80	980.90	+ 8.10	...
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD Alban Gate, 14th Flr, 125 London Wall, Lond EC2Y 5AS 0171 710 4567				
GT Plan Far East	340.00	357.90	+ 0.40	..
GT Plan Wwide	580.50	611.10	+ 7.45	..
GAN LIFE & PENSIONS Gan House, Harlow, Essex CM20 2EW 01279 626262				
Portfolio Acc	822.00	822.00	+ 7.52	.
-do- Inv A	821.90	865.30	+ 8.00	.
UK Equity	528.50	556.40	+ 7.20	.
Gilt Plus	230.20	242.50	- 1.10	..
Managed	372.50	392.20	+ 3.70	...
GENERAL ACCIDENT 2 Rougier St, York YO1 1HR. 01904 628982				
Managed	261.50	275.10	+ 2.90	
Unitised Profit	168.40	168.80	+ 0.20	.
UK Equity	383.90	403.60	+ 5.50	.
Fixed Int	223.60	235.50	- 1.90	.
Index-Linked	185.40	195.10	- 1.30	.
Cash Deposit	189.10	199.00	+ 0.20	.
Property	192.60	192.70	+ 0.10	
International	208.40	219.20	+ 2.10	.
American	236.10	248.50	+ 4.20	
Japan	194.20	204.30	- 1.40	.
Japan Smllr Cos	198.90	209.20	- 1.55	.
European	232.00	244.10	+ 5.40	.
Pacific Fund	327.10	344.20	- 1.70	..
Conv Life	164.60	171.10	+ 2.30	.
Formerly Provident Mutual				
Managed Ord	596.60	628.00	+ 6.60	.
Managed Initial	373.90	393.60	+ 3.90	.
Equity Ord	969.00	1020.00	+13.90	.
Equity Init	607.30	639.30	+ 8.40	..
I-Linked Gilt Ord	225.90	237.90	- 2.30	..
I-Linked Gilt Init	147.90	155.70	- 1.60	...
Overs Equity Ord	448.00	471.60	+ 5.90	..
Overs Equity Init	280.70	295.50	+ 3.20	..
Property Ord	283.90	298.70	+ 0.30	...
Property Init	177.80	187.20	...	..
Fixed Int Ord	327.10	344.30	- 2.90	..
Fixed Int Init	205.00	215.90	- 1.60	
Deposit Ord	225.40	237.30	+ 0.10	..
Deposit Initial	141.30	148.70	+ 0.10	
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE Royal Exchange London EC3. 0171 283 7101				
Ass Prop Bds	887.70	924.70	.	.
Managed Initial	565.40	595.20	+ 7.00	.
-do- Acc	869.30	915.00	+12.20	.
Equity Initial	918.30	966.60	+17.10	
-do- Acc	1377.50	1450	+26.20	
Fixed Int Initial	481.30	506.60	- 4.50	.
-do- Acc	722.30	760.30	- 6.80	
Intl Initial	514.80	541.90	+ 7.10	
-do- Acc	772.20	813	+10.50	...
Nth Amer Initial	263	276.90	+ 4.90	
-do- Acc	359.10	378	+ 6.60	
Pacific Initial	211.90	222	- 0.40	
-do- Acc	286.50	301.60	- 0.40	...
Property Initial	185	194.70		.
-do- Acc	277.30	291.90		
Index-Linkd Initl	175.30	184.50	- 1.60	
-do- Acc	234.10	246.50	- 2.20	
Deposit Initial	205.90	216.70	+ 0.10	..
-do- Acc	308.70	325	+ 0.20	.
Euro Initial	134.30	141.30	+ 3.20	
-do- Acc	169.40	178.30	+ 4.20	
HALIFAX LIFE LTD PO Box 295, York Y01 1YB 01904 611110				
Life Funds				
Foundation	31.74	33.41	+ 0.33	.
Balanced	31.60	33.26	+ 0.47	
Opportunity	32.56	34.27	+ 0.46	
Deposit	25.77	27.13	+ 0.01	
Pension Funds				
Foundation S2	24.43	25.72	+ 0.44	..
Balanced S2	24.57	25.86	+ 0.56	
Opportunity S2	24.34	25.62	+ 0.54	
Deposit S2	23.66	27.14	+ 0.05	.
HAMBRO ASSURED Harbour House, Portway, Preston, Lancs PR2 2PR. 01772 840000				
Managed	211.20	222.30	+ 1.10	...
-do- Pens	273.10	287.40	+ 1.50	...
UK Equity	229.30	241.30	+ 2.40	...
-do- Pens	279.20	293.80	+ 3.70	...
International	176.90	186.20	+ 0.90	...
-do- Pens	197.70	208.10	+ 1.30	..
Deposit	151.40	159.30	+ 0.20	...
-do- Pens	184.20	193.80	+ 0.20	...
HILL SAMUEL LIFE NLA Tower, Addiscombe Road, Croydon 0181 686 4355				
Security Fund	727.60	770.00	+ 9.30	.
British Fund	743.10	786.40	+12.50	...
International	655.50	693.70	+10.50	...
Dollar Fund	604.30	639.50	+14.50	...
Capital Fund	625.20	661.60	+ 9.20	...
Income Fund	920.60	974.20	+16.70	...
Property Series A	512.00	541.80	...	4.90
Property Units	852.20	898.90	...	..
Financial Fund	893.00	945.00	+12.00	...
Managed Ser A	689.20	729.40	+ 9.30	...
Managed Units	1244.30	1309.80	+14.70	...
High Yield Fund	822.50	870.40	+13.60	...
Money Series A	315.80	334.20	+ 0.20	..
Money Units	422.20	444.50	+ 0.30	..
Equity Fund	799.90	846.50	+11.90	...
Fixed Interest	429.80	454.90	- 2.10	...
Indexed Secs	208.10	220.30	- 1.70	...
European Fund	993.30	1051.30	+23.20	..
Natural Res	333.50	353.00	+ 2.90	...
Far East Fund	628.00	664.60	- 1.50	...
Smaller Cos	710.10	751.50	+ 6.70	...
Special Sits	719.50	761.40	+12.50	...
Man Currency	282.70	299.20	+ 1.30	...
Japanese Tech	257.70	272.70	- 3.10	..
US Smaller Cos	446.20	472.20	+ 9.60	..
Formerly Target Life Assurance Co Ltd				
Deposit	250.40	264.70	+ 0.20	...
Financial Ser 1	71.90	76.70	+ 1.20	...
Fixed Interest	376.40	396.30	- 3.60	...
Gold	85.30	89.90	- 1.70	..
Managed	762.70	802.90	- 3.00	..
Mngd Growth	240.90	253.70	- 6.10	..
Mngd Opp	255.40	268.90	- 6.50	..
Property	380.30	400.30	..	...
Residential Prop	115.90	122.10		...
TSB American	335.70	353.50	- 4.00	
TSB Brit Gwth	1162.70	1224.00	+ 7.50	..
TSB European	367.10	386.50	+ 4.30	
TSB Income	531.90	560.00	+ 2.60	
TSB Intl	501.00	527.20	+ 1.20	
TSB Intl Inc	351.40	370.00	- 0.70	
TSB Pacific	445.00	468.50	- 9.70	.
TSB Prem Inc	727.50	765.80	- 1.60	
IRISH LIFE ASSURANCE Irish Life Centre, Victoria Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 5TF. 01727 48151				
Global Managed	716.40	754.10	+ 8.60	...
Global Property	317.20	333.90	+ 1.30	
Global Fixed Int	597.00	628.40	- 4.30	.
Global Equity	777.40	828.90	+ 8.10	..
Global Cash	233.30	245.60	+ 0.20	.
For Laurentian see Lincoln				
LEGAL & GENERAL UNIT ASSURANCE 2 Montefiore Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 1SE 01273 824000				
B Soc Lnkd Init	134.90	141.90		
-do- Acc	198.30	208.90	..	
Brit Opps Init	143.80	151.50	+ 2.20	..
-do- Acc	244.10	257.00	+ 3.60	..
Cash Initial	170.00	179.00	- 0.50	
-do- Acc	314.80	331.40	+ 0.10	.
Equity Initial	838.80	883.00	+12.20	.
-do- Acc	1544.90	1626.30	+26.50	..
Fixed Initial	276.50	290.60	- 4.30	
-do- Acc	694.20	730.80	- 6.00	.
Index-Lnkd Gilt	140.40	147.70	- 1.00	.
-do- Acc	220.50	232.30	- 2.20	
Intl Initial	350.30	368.90	+ 2.00	..
-do- Acc	635.20	668.70	+ 5.30	..
Managed Initial	560.20	589.70	+ 5.40	.
-do- Acc	1031.50	1085.80	+12.60	.
Property Initial	226.90	238.90	+ 0.50	.
-do- Acc	418.00	440.00	+ 0.70	.
LINCOLN The Quays, 101-105 Oxford Road, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 1LZ 01895 200 200				
Equity Units	17376	.	+265.00	.
Property Units	2128	2042	- 32.00	.
Bal Bd Exec Unit	8170	8600	+110.00	...
2nd Equity Acc	821.10	864.40	+13.10	.
2nd High Inc Ac	789.30	830.90	+10.90	..
2nd Property Acc	263.40	277.20	+ 2.80	
2nd Mngd 2 Acc	202.50	213.20	+ 0.90	.
2nd Mngd 3 Acc	567.90	597.80	+ 7.10	...
2nd Mngd 4 Acc	228.20	240.70	+ 3.50	..
2nd Deposit Acc	309.00	325.30	+ 0.30	.
2nd Gilt Acc	343.20	361.20	- 1.90	.
2nd Amer Acc	436.50	459.60	+17.70	...
2nd Intl Mny Acc	244.50	257.40	- 1.60	
2nd Index Ac	228.80	240.80	- 1.70	.
2nd Far East Acc	422.50	444.50	+ 0.90	..
2nd Global Acc	195.40	205.60	+ 2.60	
2nd Euro Acc	202.20	212.80	+ 6.10	.
2nd Japan Acc	142.90	150.30	- 2.91	...
2nd Int Cr Bd Acc	173.60	182.72	+ 1.03	.
2nd Cap Gth Acc	180.80	190.21	+ 2.61	.
ex-Laurentian				
Property	561.70	591.20	+ 3.70	...
Managed	526.00	553.60	+ 5.50	
American	558.90	588.20	+11.00	
UK Equity Fd	597.00	628.40	+ 9.00	
Japan	156.00	164.40	- 2.60	
Index Lkd	204.30	215.00	- 1.50	..
High Yield	1101	1159	+17.00	
Money	430.10	462.10	+ 0.30	.
International	433.00	455.70	+ 4.70	
Henderson Active	234.60	247.10	+ 1.40	.
Perpetual Active	397.00	417.70	+ 6.70	
Growth Acc	791.80	833.60	+ 8.00	
Gilt Edged	486.20	511.70	- 7.60	
European	184.30	194.00	+ 5.40	..
Far East	235.50	247.90	+ 1.60	...
LONDON LIFE 100 Temple Street, Bristol BS1 6EA 0117 984 7777				
Equity 1	£11.43	.	+16.50	.
Fixed Interest 1	502.30	...	- 2.20	...
Property 1	465.70	...	- 0.80	.
Deposit 1	321.40	...	+ 0.30	.
Mixed 1	725.00	...	+ 7.80	...
Indexed Stock 1	244.90	...	- 1.70	...
International 1	329.10	...	+ 2.60	..
Equity A 1	264.60	...	+ 4.30	...
Fixed Int A 1	222.30	...	- 1.00	...
Property A 1	204.10	..	- 0.40	
Deposit A 1	188.40	...	+ 0.20	...
Mixed A 1	237.60	...	+ 2.60	..
Index Stock A 1	191.20	...	- 1.40	...
International A 1	205.00	...	+ 1.60	...
Equity P 1	996.60	...	+19.30	...
Fixed Int P 1	686.50	...	- 2.80	...
Property P 1	365.80	.	- 0.50	...
Deposit P 1	386.30	...	+ 0.50	...
Mixed P 1	690.20	..	+10.40	..
Index Stock P 1	281.40	...	- 1.90	...
International P 1	393.10	..	+ 7.00	...
LONDON & MANCHESTER ASSURANCE Winslade Park, Exeter EX5 1DS. 01392 282456				
Inv Trust Cap 1	635.10	...	- 4.00	..
-do- Acc 1	1175.40	...	+ 8.20	...
Property Cap 1	141.00	.	- 0.50	...
-do- Acc 1	249.10	...	- 0.60	..
Fxd Interest Cap 1	203.90	..	- 1.80	
-do- Acc 1	363.30	...	- 2.80	...
Equity Cap 1	385.50	...	+ 3.40	.
-do- Acc 1	699.00	...	+ 6.90	.
Internatl Cap 1	245.60	...	+ 0.70	...
-do- Acc 1	440.30		+ 1.60	...
Gtd Deposit Cap 1	160.50	..	...	...
-do- Acc 1	283.90	...	+ 0.30	7.20
Flexible Cap 1	380.30	.	+ 1.80	..
-do- Acc 1	701.30	.	+ 3.90	..
Moneymaker Fd 1	535.50		+ 1.60	.
Capital Growth 1	2280.00	.	+20.70	.
M & G Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1FB 01245 266266				
Amer Bond Acc	602.80	633.50	+ 8.70	.
Amer Rec Bond	689.70	724.30	+15.60	..
Am Smlr Cos Bd	281.20	294.80	+ 4.70	
Australasia Bd	335.30	352.20	+10.50	
Commodity Bond	451.30	473.90	+11.10	...
Deposit Bond Acc	393.40	413.20	+ 0.30	..
Equity Bond Acc	1871.40	1967.20	+18.00	...
European Bd Acc	526.80	553.20	+13.10	...
Extra Yld Bd Acc	966.90	1015.30	+17.40	
Gilt Bond Acc	510.70	536.30	- 4.50	.
Gold Bond Acc	190.50	200.10	- 0.40	.
High Yield Bond	401.80	421.10	+ 7.90	..
Index-Lnk Gt Bd	230.60	242.50	- 1.40	...
International Bd	908.00	953.50	+16.80	...
Japan Bond Acc	184.20	193.50	- 1.60	..
Japan Sm Cos Ac	180.20	189.20	- 0.90	..
Managed Bonds	1092.40	1147.20	+ 5.10	
Prop Bond Acc	501.00	526.30	+ 2.50	
Rec Bond Acc	967.50	1009.10	+12.40	..
S East Asia Bd Acc	272.40	291.10	+ 4.40	..
MGM ASSURANCE MGM House, Heene Road, Worthing BN11 2DY. 01903 204631				
UK Equity	290.30	305.60	+ 4.00	.
UK Equity Acc	443.10	466.50	+ 7.70	..
Special Sits	121.70	128.20	+ 2.20	..
Special Sits Acc	185.80	195.60	+ 3.30	.
North American	243.90	256.70	+ 2.50	..
N American Acc	372.20	391.80	+ 4.10	
Pacific Basin	345.30	363.50	+ 0.90	..
Pacific Basin Acc	527.10	554.90	+ 1.80	.
Fixed Interest	306.40	322.60	- 1.70	..
Fixed Interest Acc	468.30	493.00	- 2.50	
Property	183.30	193.00	.	..
Property Acc	280.20	295.00	+ 0.20	...
Deposit	154.80	163.00	...	...
Deposit Acc	236.70	249.20	+ 0.20	..
Managed	311.60	328.00	+ 4.00	.
Managed Acc	476.40	501.50	+ 5.90	.
MERCHANT INVESTORS St Bartholomews House, Lewins Mead Bristol BS1 2NH 0117 9266 366				
Property	435.10	458.00	+ 0.50	.
UK Equity	471.30	496.10	+ 5.00	.
Gilt Edged	686.80	722.70	- 2.20	.
Interest Fund	435.20	458.10	+ 0.50	.
Managed Fd	592.10	623.20	+ 1.00	..
Intl Equity	711.00	748.40	+ 2.90	
North American	296.60	310.10	+ 4.10	
Far East	458.50	482.60	+ 2.60	.
Intl Currency	261.60	275.30	+ 0.90	
NPI 48 Gracechurch Street, London EC3P 3HH 0171 623 4200				
Managed	601.10	634.80	+ 5.00	.
UK Equity	940.80	985.00	+12.80	
Overseas Equity	551.50	580.50	+ 5.00	
Americas	541.30	569.70	+ 5.00	
Far East	572.00	603.00	- 0.60	
Property	232.00	244.60	- 1.10	
Fixed Interest	447.50	471.00	- 3.90	...
Indexed Gilt	257.60	271.10	- 2.10	
Deposit	227.40	240.80	+ 0.30	
NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY - Ex NUAM Funds PO Box 140, Norwich NR3 1PP 01603 622200				
Managed Fund	1847.30	1944.50	+22.20	
Equity Fund	4269.60	4494.30	+58.40	
Property Fd	672.30	707.70	+ 0.40	
Fixed Int Fd	697.20	734.00	- 4.30	
Deposit Fund	385.00	405.20	+ 0.50	...
Intl Fund	981.50	1033.30	+ 3.90	
OLD MUTUAL 2 Bartley Way, Hook, Hants RG27 9XA 01256 768888				
Equity Fund Acc	384.70	405.90	+ 6.10	...
Fxd Interest Acc	283.10	299.70	- 2.20	..
International Acc	296.70	313.00	+ 4.50	...
Managed Acc	266.00	280.60	+ 3.40	...
Property Acc	218.10	230.10	+ 0.50	..
Money Acc	168.80	178.10	+ 0.10	...
Spec Mkt Acc	217.20	229.20	+ 2.30	...
Japan Equity Acc	94.00	99.20	- 1.40	...
N Amer Acc	228.30	240.90	+ 4.90	...
Pacific Acc	142.40	150.30	+ 0.30	...
European Acc	267.60	282.30	+ 3.20	.
PEARL ASSURANCE The Pearl Centre, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6FY. 01733 470 470				
Inv Prop Dist	141.60	149.10	- 0.60	...
Prop Acc (Gross)	340.40	358.40	- 1.40	...
Inv Equity	1607.40	1692.10	+26.40	..
Inv Managed	1067.60	1123.80	+12.10	..
Ret Managed	1245.20	1310.80	+13.80	..
For Provident Mutual see General Accident				
PRUDENTIAL Holborn Bars, London EC1N 2NH 0171 405 9222				
Managed	435.60	453.60	...	...
PRUDENTIAL INDIVIDUAL LIFE FDS 1 Stephen Street, London W1P 2AP 0171 548 3278				
Managed Fund	995.90	1048.40	+10.70	...
Equity Fund	2097.10	2207.50	+34.10	...
Intl Fund	766.30	806.60	+ 5.70	..
Fixed Interest	652.90	687.30	- 3.40	..
Property Fund	500.80	527.20	+ 0.40	.
Cash Fund	397.90	418.90	+ 0.30	...
Pacific Basin	362.60	381.70	- 2.30	..
N American Fd	403.90	425.20	+ 6.30	
Euro Fund	376.90	396.80	+ 7.30	..
Balanced Fund	197.50	207.90	+ 2.10	..
Strategic Fund	215.70	227.10	+ 2.90	...
ROYAL HERITAGE LIFE ASSURANCE Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough PE2 6GG. 01733 390000				
Mult Grow (45) 1	941.10	..	+13.00	...
-do- Acc	516.60	543.70	+ 5.80	...
Op Prop	527.50	555.20	- 0.20	...
Op Equity	1284.70	1352.30	+17.10	
Op High Yield	688.70	724.90	- 5.00	..
Op Managed	993.40	1045.60	+ 7.60	..
Op Deposit	427.70	450.20	+ 0.40	
Japan Smllr	175.70	185.00	- 1.80	.
Managed Gilt	358.50	377.30	- 0.30	...
British	479.30	504.50	- 4.10	.
Global Bond	124.30	130.80	+ 0.70	...
Gold Share	92.10	96.90	- 2.20	...
Japan	325.40	345.60	- 2.10	..
UK Smllr Cos	987.50	1039.40	+19.20	...
Mngd Growth	581.80	612.40	- 0.30	.
ROYAL LIFE INSURANCE New Hall Place, Liverpool L69 3HS 0151 239 3000				
Royal Life Unit Linked				
Managed Fund	483.10	508.50	+ 3.40	...
Equity Fund	718.30	756.10	+ 8.00	...
Property Fund	351.20	371.70	- 0.20	.
International	571.40	601.40	+ 2.80	...
Pacific Basin	279.00	293.60	- 0.40	...
United States	391.70	412.30	+ 6.50	...
Gilt Fund	432.70	455.40	- 3.30	
SAVE & PROSPER 16-22 Western Road, Romford, Essex RM1 3LB. 01708 766966				
Bal Inv Fund	91.90	97.20	+ 0.40	2.41
Deposit Fund (2)	413.50	437.10	+ 0.50	6.50
Gilt Fund	606.70	642.10	- 4.10	8.25
Global Equity Fd	282.00	298.50	+ 1.70	..
Property Fund (4)	122.30	129.40	+ 0.20	7.40
AG Bond Fund	165.40	175.10	+ 1.40	.
SCOTTISH AMICABLE 150 St Vincent Street, Glasgow 0141 248 2323				
Equity	786.20	827.60	+ 8.60	..
Fixed Interest	424.30	446.60	- 1.80	..
Index-Linked	219.00	230.40	- 1.70	..
International	521.90	549.40	+ 0.30	
Property	324.50	341.60	+ 0.40	.
Cash	250.00	263.20	+ 0.20	
Managed	577.30	607.70	+ 1.20	
Cap Gteed Bd	154.50	162.70	+ 1.40	...
90% Safeguard	101.20	...	+ 0.50	..
100% Safeguard	98.80		+ 0.30	..
Wealth Pres Cap	104.10		.	.
Wealth Pres Inc	64.30		+10.90	
SCOTTISH EQUITABLE 28 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YF 0131 556 9101				
Cash	198.00	208.00	+ 0.10	..
Index-Linked	184.00	194.20	- 1.70	...
Fixed Interest	212.50	223.60	- 1.60	..
Mixed	326.50	343.70	+ 3.50	
UK Equity	322.10	339.00	+ 4.90	..
International	408.50	430.00	+ 4.50	
American	396.00	417.50	+10.40	.
Japan	190.00	200.00	- 1.00	
European	401.30	422.30	+ 4.00	
Pacific	361.00	380.10	+ 4.40	
Technology	538.80	567.10	+ 7.50	
Prem Bd Guaree	244.00	257.00	- 1.00	.
SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS 19 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YE 0131 225 2211				
Property	215.80	227.60	+ 0.30	..
UK Equity	494.50	520.60	+ 7.10	.
American	378.80	398.80	+10.80	.
Pacific	150.30	158.20	- 0.30	.
European	637.70	671.30	+20.80	
Global Mngd	375.00	395.00	+ 5.60	..
Fixed Interest	275.50	290.00	- 0.90	
Index Linked	222.10	233.90	- 1.50	...
Deposit	213.30	224.70	+ 0.20	...
Managed	362.20	381.40	+ 4.10	...
Worldwide	141.80	149.40	+ 3.10	...
Pen Worldwide	154.40	162.70	+ 3.90	...
SCOTTISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE 109 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5HN 0141 248 6321				
Flex Fund (35)	2143.80	2210.10	...	...
Safety Fund	280.50	295.30	+ 0.40	...
Growth Fund	294.50	310.00	+ 4.00	..
Opportunity Fd	295.50	311.10	+ 3.80	..
Cash Fund	189.40	199.40	+ 0.10	.
European Fund	463.70	488.20	+13.20	..
Gilts & Fxd Int	238.00	250.60	- 2.00	...
Index-Linked Fd	202.90	213.60	- 1.50	
International Fd	330.70	348.20	+ 5.70	...
North American	334.40	352.00	+ 7.90	...
Property Fund	131.00	137.90	- 0.10	..
UK Equity	329.20	346.60	+ 5.20	..
UK Smaller	351.70	370.30	+ 2.60	..
SCOTTISH PROVIDENT 6 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YA 0131 556 9181				
Mixed	345.50	363.70	+ 3.40	...
Equity	387.80	408.30	+ 4.50	..
International	317.50	334.30	- 3.90	..
Property	247.40	260.50	+ 0.30	..
Fixed Interest	272.00	286.40	- 1.00	...
Index Linked	204.20	215.10	- 2.00	...
Cash	202.00	212.70	+ 0.10	...
Formerly Prolific				
Bal Gwth Mngd	1021.80	1087.10	+12.40	...
Cash Fund	368.40	388.20	+ 0.40	..
Property Fund	319.80	337.00	+ 0.40	..
Equity Fund	1085.80	1155.20	+12.80	..
Fxd Interest Fund	556.10	586.00	- 0.30	...
International	449.90	478.70	+ 6.30	...
High Income	946.50	1007.00	+12.00	.
Far East	591.50	629.30	+ 5.20	
North American	782.50	832.50	+20.20	
Special Sits	937.30	997.20	+11.70	...
Technology	1017.30	1082.30	+12.60	.
Extra Income Fd	509.40	542.00	+ 5.30	
Gilt Fund	540.80	575.40	+ 0.50	.
European	195.80	208.40	+ 4.00	...
Adventurous Mg	260.70	274.80	+ 3.90	..
Secure Mgd	180.90	190.70	+ 0.80	
Equity Inc Dist	144.40	152.20	+ 1.50	4.04
Managed Dist	127.50	134.30	+ 1.00	4.47
Henderson Investment Bonds				
UK Equity Fd	431.60	459.20	+ 3.60	.
North America	479.40	510.10	+ 6.80	
Far East Fund	584.60	622.00	- 6.10	
Global Managed	568.10	604.30	+ 2.80	
Deposit Fund	248.30	261.40	+ 0.20	.
Prime Residential	141.10	148.60	- 0.60	.
European Fund	356.10	378.90	+ 5.70	
Fixed Interest	64.20	68.30	+ 0.10	
SCOTTISH WIDOWS PO Box 902, Edinburgh EH16 5BU 0131 655 6000				
Inv Pol 1	1266.40	1266.40	+14.70	
Inv Pol 2	1144.30	1204.60	-13.60	.
Inv Pol 3	1081.20	1138.20	-12.40	.
Inv Cash	345.30	363.50	+ 0.50	
Mixed Fund	567.80	597.70	+ 6.80	
Equity Fund	733.20	771.90	+15.10	
Property Fund	270.40	284.70	+ 0.10	
International Fd	572.70	602.90	+ 8.20	.
Fixed Interest Fd	441.80	465.10	- 4.00	
Indexed Stock Fd	225.30	237.30	- 2.20	.
Cash Fund	249.70	262.90	+ 0.30	.
SKANDIA LIFE Skandia House, Portland Terrace, Southampton SO9 7BX 01703 334411				
Managed Acc	487.10	512.70	+ 9.30	.
Equity Acc	624.00	656.80	+ 6.00	
International Acc	371.50	391.00	- 1.90	.
Property	240.50	253.10	+ 0.20	.
STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE CO Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2DH 0131 225 2552				
Cash	213.10	224.60	+ 0.20	
Equity	1385.10	1458.00	+22.50	
European	213.00	224.20	+ 4.60	
Far East	172.60	181.70	- 0.50	
Fixed Interest	463.30	487.70	- 4.60	
Index Linked	239.00	251.60	- 1.60	
International	690.50	726.80	+ 5.20	
Managed	898.50	945.80	+10.30	
Nth American	205.40	216.30	+ 3.90	
Property	409.10	431.30	+ 1.30	
Pensions				
Cash	409.50	431.00	+ 0.40	
Equity	2141.40	2254.20	+37.50	...
European	284.20	299.20	+ 6.00	
Far East	136.60	143.80	- 1.00	
Fixed Interest	664.70	699.70	- 2.40	
Index Linked	348.30	366.60	- 2.70	...
International	1058.20	1113.80	+ 9.60	
Managed	1345.00	1415.80	+16.60	
Nth American	279.70	294.40	+ 6.20	..
Property	576.80	607.00	+ 1.60	
Stock Exchange	300.00	315.80	+ 7.40	
SUN ALLIANCE St Mark's Court, Horsham, Sussex 01403 232323				
Managed Fund	874.40	920.40	+13.50	
Equity Fund	1212.10	1275.90	+21.60	
Fixed Interest Fd	473.00	498.00	- 4.60	
Index-Linked Fd	181.20	190.80	- 1.50	
Property Fund	561.20	590.80	+ 0.10	
International Fd	812.60	855.40	+14.40	
N American Fd	401.10	422.20	+ 8.40	
Far East Fund	286.10	301.20	+ 0.30	
Deposit Fund	327.50	344.70	+ 0.40	
Intnl Bd 1	£11.20		+ 1.10	
Worldwide Bond	166.70	175.50	+ 0.60	
European	252.20	265.50	+ 6.00	..
Phoenix Assurance				
Wealth Assured	873.00	919.10	+ 0.20	...
Ebor Phoenix Eq	590.00	621.70	...	..
Property Growth				
Property Fund 1	656.60	...	+ 0.80	...
-do- Acc 1	617.50	...	+ 0.70	...
Agricultural Fd 1	909.20	..	+ 0.80	.
-do- Acc 1	867.30	...	+ 0.70	..
Abbey Nat Fd 1	485.80	...	+ 0.50	...
Abbey Nat Acc 1	508.10	...	+ 0.50	...
Investment Fd 1	469.50	..	+ 6.90	...
Investment (A) 1	448.90	...	+ 6.50	...
Equity 1	1783.30	.	+30.40	..
Equity Acc 1	1698.30	..	+29.00	...
Money Fund 1	528.00	...	+ 0.60	...
-do- Acc 1	502.30	...	+ 0.40	...
Actuarial Fd 1	767.10	...	+11.10	...
Gilt-Edged Fd 1	447.40	...	- 3.30	...
-do- Acc 1	447.40	...	- 3.20	...
Retire Annuity 1	1375.50	...	+ 8.40	...
Immed Annuity 1	301.00	..	...	...
Bldg Soc Life 1	248.70	...	+ 0.30	...
SUN LIFE OF CANADA Basingview, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2DZ Dealing: 01256 841414				
Growth Acc 1	1882.70	..	+ 1.30	...
Managed Acc 1	1062.30	.	- 2.70	...
Equity Account 1	1601.80	..	- 4.10	..
Mngd Fund Acc	483.20	508.70	- 1.30	...
Equity Fund Acc	691.30	727.70	- 2.00	...
Prop Fund Acc	285.70	300.70	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Int Fd Acc	369.30	388.80	- 0.60	...
Money Fund Acc	241.10	253.80	+ 0.20	...
Indx-Lnk Scs Ac	231.20	243.30	- 0.70	...
Pers Pens Acc 1	2411.30	...	- 6.70	...
Pens Mngd Acc	1120.60	1179.60	- 3.20	...
Pens Guarantee	301.50	317.40	+ 0.50	...
Pens Equity	451.30	475.10	- 1.70	..
Pens Property	330.10	347.50	+ 0.50	..
Pens Fixed Int	357.00	376.50	- 0.90	
Pens Intl	295.20	310.80	- 0.80	...
Pens Money	265.80	279.80	+ 0.20	..
Pens Indx-Lnkd	225.80	237.70	- 1.10	
SUN LIFE UNIT St James Barton, Bristol BS99 7SL 0117 9426911				
Managed Acc	1111.40	1169.90	+ 5.50	..
Property Acc	423.90	446.30	+ 3.60	...
Equity Acc	1933.40	2035.20	+18.90	..
Fixed Int Acc	478.30	503.50	- 2.40	..
Cash Acc	341.10	359.10	+ 0.30	..
Amer Equity Acc	544.20	572.90	+ 9.80	...
Japan Acc	229.90	242.00	- 9.30	...
Pacific Acc	410.80	432.50	- 2.40	...
Far Eastern Acc	827.80	871.40	-11.80	.
International Acc	683.30	719.30	- 1.90	...
Distribution Fund	312.70	329.20	+ 1.30	5.70
European	239.00	251.60	+ 6.10	...
Defind Dist	206.40	217.30	+ 1.20	...
TSB LIFE LTD Charlton Place, Andover, Hants SP10 1RE 01264 345678				
Managed Fund	355.70	374.50	+ 4.90	..
Property Fund	234.70	247.10	...	.
Fixed Interest Fd	256.90	270.60	- 1.60	...
Money Fund	219.00	230.70	+ 0.20	...
Equity Fund	476.20	501.30	+ 8.00	...
WINDSOR LIFE Windsor House, Telford, Shropshire 01952 292929				
Managed Bond	902.50	950.00	+10.70	...
Money Fund	346.80	365.00	..	..
Equity Fund	846.80	891.30	+14.20	.
Fixed Interest	326.40	343.50	- 3.20	...
Property Fund	401.30	422.30	...	...
Gresham Framlington				
American & Genl	723.70	762.00	+11.70	...
Income	959.70	1011.30	+ 9.70	...
International Gth	726.40	765.40	+ 7.20	..
Capital Fund	836.30	881.20	- 8.40	
Recovery Fund	629.40	663.20	- 4.90	.
Japan & General	206.60	217.70	- 3.20	...
Formerly Aetna Life Funds				
Squirrel	19.73	20.77	- 0.01	.
Bear	24.51	25.80	+ 0.14	...
Owl	27.96	29.45	+ 0.42	..
Bull	23.16	24.41	+ 0.22	..
Stag	24.87	26.18	+ 0.16	...
Gilt Edged	21.67	22.79	- 0.04	...
Deposit	17.06	17.96	+ 0.01	..
Pensions				
Squirrel	27.63	29.08	+ 0.03	..
Bear	35.81	37.69	- 0.26	...
Owl	40.42	42.55	+ 0.75	..
Bull	31.58	33.24	+ 0.30	..
Stag	33.78	35.56	+ 0.32	..
Gilt Edged	28.50	30.00	- 0.07	...
Deposit	22.75	23.95	+ 0.03	
Pre 1992 Series				
3 Ws Fund		763.47	- 7.10	...
1992 Series				
UK Equity	470.20	495.01	+ 8.10	.
N Amer Equity	385.27	405.55	- 1.23	...
Far East Equity	411.42	433.07	- 4.73	.
Fixed	344.73	362.89	- 0.75	.
Cash Deposit	233.57	245.65	+ 0.16	
Property	170.96	179.96	+ 0.37	...
Special Opps	480.16	505.43	+ 3.01	
Managed	401.51	422.64	- 3.90	.
Index Linked Fd	212.86	224.06	- 0.74	...
Formerly Crown Life				
Life Mangd Acc	752.70	792.30	+ 8.90	
Life Fxd Int Acc	433.50	456.30	- 4.10	...
Life Equity Acc	1115.40	1172.90	+18.60	..
Life Money Acc	326.50	343.60		.
Life Inv Tr Acc	985.00	1037.00	+11.60	
Life Intl Acc	572.50	602.20	- 4.20	.
Life High Inc Acc	1036.70	1087.30	+17.40	
Life Property Acc	269.60	283.70	...	...
Brown Equity	910.30	958.20	- 0.50	..

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

For AB see Govett (John)

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS 01203 553 231				
General Acc	734.60	781.50	+13.70	2.25
General Inc	613.10	652.50	+11.40	2.25
UK Growth Acc	510.00	542.60	+10.50	2.38
UK Growth Inc	330.00	351.30	+ 6.90	2.35
Higher Inc Acc	909.10	967.20	+17.50	2.85
Higher Inc Inc	484.30	515.30	+ 7.40	3.89
Gilt & Fxd Int Acc	216.80	230.90	- 1.50	5.82
Gilts Fxd Int Inc	91.63	97.84	- 1.08	5.82
Nth American	372.80	396.70	+ 6.00	
Europe	400.70	426.30	+10.50	0.16
Brit Fixed	100.50	107.00	- 0.50	7.50
Brit Frndly Acc	127.70	135.90	+ 2.00	4.42
Brit Frndly Inc	85.47	90.93	+ 1.32	4.45
Global Opps	106.70	113.60	+ 1.70	
Balanced Acc	67.52	71.84	- 0.83	2.42
Balanced Inc	63.05	67.09	- 0.82	2.42
Japan Acc	37.88	40.30	- 0.16	
The Baron Acc	410.80	437.10	+ 2.50	0.85
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS 0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed Int	133.30	141.20†	- 3.30	6.73
High Inc Equity	199.90	213.80	+ 3.60	4.44
Worldwide Bond	269.90	286.20†	+ 0.50	4.25
American Growth	436.30	466.40	+ 7.70	0.35
Asian Pacific	341.40	365.10	- 0.10	0.38
Assets & Earnings	327.30	350.70	+ 4.00	2.69
Euro Capital Acc	297.80	322.20	+ 6.90	0.71
Extra Inc	43.11	45.69†	- 0.45	7.95
General	296.70	315.60†	+ 4.90	2.82
Global Opps	76.11	80.97	+ 1.75	0.43
Japan	53.41	55.63	1.41	
Managed Inc	49.97	53.16†	+ 0.53	4.23
Mastertrust	178.40	190.80	+ 1.90	1.26
US Emerging Cos	192.80	205.10	+ 3.80	
Ethical	89.57	95.29	- 0.30	1.65
International	142.30	151.40	+ 1.20	0.57
Dividend & Growth	73.68	78.38	+ 1.38	4.29
Global Gwth & Sec	74.95	80.11	+ 0.03	2.52
Latin America	81.62	86.83	+ 1.09	0.85
Capital Reserve	147.90	147.90	+ 0.10	4.60
ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0141 275 8500				
N&P UK Growth	99.06	105.40	+ 2.30	2.29
Equity Income	139.10	147.90	+ 2.90	4.08
Extra Income	268.80	285.90	+ 5.10	6.27
Smaller Cos	116.10	123.50	+ 0.90	1.44
International	119.40	127.00	+ 2.50	1.34
ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0131 220 0733				
UK Small Cos	2600.00	2701.00	-20.00	
ABTRUST UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0800 833 580				
Amer Inc & Growth	65.53	68.00	+ 1.46	0.14
Emerging Mkts	80.32	83.65	- 1.19	0.04
European	165.40	177.90†	+ 2.90	
Extra Income #	52.33	55.07†	+ 0.07	5.91
Far East Emg Ecn	130.00	139.50	+ 0.30	0.45
Fixed Interest #	26.76	27.83†		8.73
Fund Inv Tst #	170.30	178.70	+ 0.02	9.29
Japan	155.80	161.90	- 2.50	
Latin American	68.97	72.81	0.03	0.67
Pacific	82.43	86.55	+ 0.42	0.33
Property Share	82.89	87.03	+ 0.90	2.02
UK Emerging Cos	74.22	80.22	+ 0.90	1.20
UK Growth	60.91	63.45	+ 0.42	1.85
Abtr World Port #	87.79	89.68	+ 1.56	2.77
Ethical	83.30	86.63	+ 0.83	2.04
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.30	50.34†	0.82	7.36
AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0171 256 5868				
Rental Property #	99.17	105.50†	+ 0.10	5.30
ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD 01452 305 958				
Amity Income	99.06	105.10†	1.12	1.93
Income Builder Inc	87.96	93.57	+ 1.62	3.83
ALLIED DUNBAR UNIT TSTS PLC				

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
Pacific Portfolio	167.42	180.09	+ 0.65	0.74
UK Equity	106.45	113.66	+ 1.90	3.18
UK Equity & Bd	61.97	65.70	+ 0.38	6.17
UK Small Cos	56.15	60.06†	- 0.14	1.57
CENT BD OF FIN OF CHURCH OF ENG 0171 588 1815				
Inv Fund	827.99	836.45		4.29
Fxd Int Sec	161.55	162.99		8.60
COIF CHARITY FUNDS 0171 588 1815				
Investment Inc	610.04	622.25	8.55	4.18
Investment Acc	822.81	838.34	-43.17	
Fixed Int Inc	150.50	151.02	- 0.53	8.65
Fixed Int Acc	243.28	244.05	1.81	
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD 0171 407 5966				
Bestman Intl	83.94	88.75	1.15	5.36
Beckman Bio-Tech	47.15	50.63	1.37	
Acorn Ethical Tst	194.11	202.90	+ 1.30	0.42
City Fin Accum	82.54	87.77		1.26
City Fin Inc	51.56	56.15	+ 0.29	0.13
Fruits Hse Gth	327.60	348.51	+ 0.38	2.28
Buckley Int'l Gth	143.17	151.87†	- 0.75	
I Sel Inc Gth Inc	61.73	64.30	+ 0.16	2.23
Chain Stores	66.95	68.55	+ 1.55	6.48
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD 0171 711 0771 Admin 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	£63.27	£63.56†	+ 0.20	
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD 0345 772 233				
American Gwth	85.17	90.61	+ 1.97	
Dragon Growth	75.06	80.29	+ 0.52	0.28
Equity High Inc	99.64	106.24†	+ 1.42	3.56
-do- Accum	146.07	156.48	+ 3.05	3.56
Extra Income Inc	27.29	29.04	- 0.22	6.56
Extra Income Acc	30.57	32.19	- 0.25	6.66
European Gwth	63.13	73.35	+ 2.15	0.39
Evergreen	32.59	34.64	+ 0.42	
General Equity	178.67	172.73	+ 2.25	2.51
Japan Growth	39.64	40.47	0.65	
Prosperity Gwth	69.86	74.80	+ 0.97	2.01
Perf Sm Cos Inc	41.34	44.45	+ 0.31	1.02
-do- Accum	44.07	47.39	+ 0.34	1.02
Retirement Inc #	30.40	32.37	- 0.31	5.50
Special Sits	51.45	55.33	+ 0.54	2.46
UK & Overseas	64.22	68.74	+ 1.47	0.54
COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD 01634 886 000				
Balanced	75.01	78.13†	+ 1.00	3.67
Capital	92.87	94.65†	+ 1.75	2.42
High Income	53.53	55.76†	- 0.41	6.47
Top 50	62.43	65.02†	+ 1.46	2.35
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD 0181 686 9918				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)				
Income Funds:				
Equity Inc	212.58	221.46	+ 3.49	4.15
Long Bd	45.00	46.95	0.79	5.99
Monthly Inc Port	54.56	56.76	- 0.61	8.18
Preference Share	50.35	52.45	- 0.50	7.43
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	154.19	161.06	+ 1.34	5.30
Managed Fund	91.11	84.50	+ 0.96	2.62
UK Growth Funds:				
Smaller Cos	57.75	60.19	- 1.66	1.58
-do- Accum	68.30	71.45	- 1.36	1.58
UK & General	104.41	112.94	+ 1.85	2.07
-do- Accum	142.64	149.60	+ 2.42	2.07
UK Growth	218.83	227.97	+ 4.29	1.73
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	232.34	242.05	+ 6.71	0.60
Far Eastern Gwth	131.71	137.21	+ 0.27	0.02
Global Bond	75.62	78.84	+ 0.37	6.29
Japan Growth	93.02	96.91	- 0.96	
North Amer Gwth	261.85	273.84	+ 5.77	
Oriental Growth	88.12	91.80	+ 0.61	0.25
Worldwide Growth	76.38	79.57	+ 1.36	
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	93.09	93.09	+ 0.07	5.30
Homeowner Fund	95.72	101.84†	+ 1.28	2.12

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-
-do- Accum	284.80	304.30	+ 8.00
Income & Growth	246.40	262.00	+ 3.30
-do- Accum	398.00	423.40	+ 5.50
Intl Growth	435.30	465.00	+ 6.10
-do- Accum	483.60	516.40	+ 6.90
Japan & Gen	136.70	145.30†	1.80
-do- Accum	138.10	146.70†	1.80
Monthly Inc #	211.50	225.00†	+ 1.50
-do- Accum #	215.40	229.10†	+ 3.00
Managed Port Inc	126.30	132.90	- 0.40
-do- Accum	137.10	144.30	- 0.40
Quarterly Income #	59.92	64.24†	+ 0.98
-do- Accum #	70.66	75.11†	+ 1.15
Recovery	345.90	369.10†	+ 1.00
-do- Accum	407.40	435.70†	+ 1.30
UK Growth	72.46	77.11	+ 1.08
-do- Accum	78.09	83.62	+ 1.14
FRIENDS PROVIDENT UNIT TRUSTS Dealing 01722 715635 Enq 01722 715834			
FP American	68.91	73.35	+ 1.16
FP Am Sm Co Cos	209.10	223.00	+ 2.40
FP Asian Growth	297.00	316.80	2.50
FP Australian	445.20	474.80	+10.50
FP Equity Dist	501.00	534.40	+ 8.40
-do- Accum	£11.18	£11.92	+18.00
FP Euro Gth	327.60	349.40	+10.00
-do- Accum	358.40	382.30	+10.90
FP Intl Bond	56.20	59.47†	- 0.01
FP Intl Cos Dist	39.96	42.62	+ 0.21
-do- Accum	58.69	62.60	+ 0.30
FP Pac Basin Acc	216.50	230.90	- 2.00
FP Income #	63.74	67.98	+ 0.61
-do- Accum #	276.60	294.70	+ 7.30
FP Jap Smllr Cos	224.60	239.50	7.80
FP Monthly Dist #	80.01	85.34†	+ 0.08
FP City Deposit	100.70	100.70	
FP Tokyo	65.03	69.36	- 1.38
FP UK Focus	46.34	49.42	+ 0.65
FP UK Growth	218.10	232.60	+ 3.20
-do- Accum	443.60	473.10	+ 6.30
Stewardship Dist	480.40	512.40	+ 7.90
-do- Accum	607.20	647.60	+ 3.70
Stewardship Inc Dist #	84.54	90.17†	+ 0.86
-do- Accum #	118.30	126.10	+ 0.90
N Am Stewp Dist	136.50	145.60	+ 3.10
-do- Accum	147.00	156.70	+ 3.40
FP Exempt Inst			
Intl Ethical In #	116.80	116.50	+ 0.80
Intl Ethical Ac #	116.00	116.50	+ 0.80
FP Managed Portfolio Service			
Capital Gwth Acc	134.80	143.40	+ 0.60
Oppty Cap Gth Acc	139.00	147.80	+ 0.80
Cap Gth Inc Inc #	123.50	131.40†	+ 0.70
Cap Gth Inc Acc #	132.20	140.60	+ 1.00
Opp Cp Gth & Ic #	128.60	136.80†	+ 0.90
Opp Cp Gth & Ac #	139.40	148.20	+ 1.00
GA UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0345 581 186/7			
GARDA	326.00	345.90	+ 3.10
Cash	49.45	50.70†	+ 0.05
Growth Portfolio	96.15	102.30	+ 1.30
Income Portfolio	78.76	83.56†	+ 1.75
GEM DOLPHIN INV MGRS LTD 0171 236 6441			
Special Sits	256.70	274.50	+ 5.40
Dividend	107.10	114.50†	+ 1.60
Inv Gth & Inc	278.50	298.30	+ 3.50
UK & Gen	56.67	59.54†	+ 0.81
Fund of Funds	80.17	85.74	+ 0.87
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD Inv 0800 212274 Dealing 0171 626 9431			
American Smlr Cos	272.30	737.70	+ 5.60
European Gth	814.60	867.40	+18.70
Euro Eq & Bd Inc	57.24	60.63	+ 0.31
-do- Accum	64.98	68.83	+ 0.36
Far East & Gen	280.90	300.90	+ 0.80
High Yield #	51.30	54.78†	0.35
-do- Accum #	58.79	61.77	0.70
Income Inc	213.70	228.60†	+ 1.30
-do- Accum	248.10	265.40	+ 5.60
Intl Growth	402.40	428.30	+ 6.10

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
JUPITER UT MGRS LTD 0171 581 3020				
World Health	219.70	233.70	+ 3.60	
Income #	246.45	262.18	+ 2.94	3.96
UK Growth	95.96	102.08	+ 1.00	1.81
Intl Growth	92.53	98.43†	+ 1.12	0.57
Ecology	113.06	120.26	+ 1.35	0.86
European	232.92	247.79	+ 4.05	0.20
Far Eastern	318.30	338.60	+ 1.10	
UK Special Sits	60.84	64.89	+ 0.62	0.37
Fd of Inv Tsts	56.83	60.61	+ 0.64	
High Income #	55.83	59.56	+ 0.72	4.70

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
Dealing 01277 261 010 Enq 01903 204 631				
European Growth	111.60	118.72	+ 4.38	0.39
Intl Bond	62.53	66.73	+ 0.10	4.70
Intl Equity Growth	89.52	95.08	+ 1.52	0.56
N Amer Growth	152.19	162.06†	- 1.54	0.75
Special Sits Growth	30.95	32.92†	+ 0.44	1.99
UK Growth	508.38	540.82	+10.05	2.41
-do- Accum	702.02	746.82	+13.69	2.41
MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD 01620 825867				
Balanced Fd #	1516.70	1538.10	+15.60	3.20
Income #	1082.10	1098.40	+12.30	4.50

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	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
KLEINWORT BENSON UNIT TRUSTS Dealers 0171 956 7354				
Income Trusts				
Bond Income	107.70	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro Pen Inc	112.40	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
-do- Accum	112.50	[illegible]	- 3.10	[illegible]
Gilt Yield	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	6.35
Global Income	246.70	[illegible]	- 2.00	3.04
High Yield	174.60	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
-do- Accum	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Money Market	[illegible]	98.99†	[illegible]	[illegible]
Smllr Cos Dis	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.75	[illegible]
Tomorrows Co Acc	104.70	110.70	[illegible]	
Capital Growth Trusts				
Amer Smlr Cos	166.30	176.70†	- 4.50	

	Sell	Buy	Chng +/-	Yld %
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD 0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	182.00	185.80		3.33
MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD 0800 363432				
M & S Inv Plntn	191.10	197.00	+ 2.90	2.31
-do- Accum	279.10	296.10	+ 3.40	2.31
UK Sel Plntn	177.50	177.50	+ 3.40	2.31
-do- Accum	210.60	216.50	+ 4.70	2.31
UK 100 Cos	129.70	129.70†	+ 2.30	2.43
-do- Accum	132.90	132.90†	+ 3.10	2.43
MARLBOROUGH FUND MGRS LTD 01204 364 842				
Managed Fd	[illegible]	79.36	0.96	3.35

Andrew Longmore finds Brian Stewart-Brown eager to accept the challenges of Cheltenham

An enduring passion for a piece of the action

Cheltenham Man apologised for being late, shuffled a few papers on his desk and muttered about a takeover bid affecting 7,000 people. He is 52, tall, with a steady gaze, sonorous voice and the respectable remains of a frame which once graced the playing fields of Harrow.

But for matters of high finance, our hour could have stretched to two or three. Brian Stewart-Brown could talk until dawn about his passion for the Cheltenham Festival. Doubtless will next week when the Guinness and champagne flow and his horses, Large Action and Ask Tom, mount a stern defence against the Irish hordes.

This year, like all the rest, Stewart-Brown will lead a party of 16 friends to the New Inn at Coln St Aldwyns near Cirencester. All the regulars will be there: Nick Filer, whose job it is to hunt for portents for the morrow's card; Giles Gleadell, a former army officer and firm friend since a chance meeting in a betting shop; and a smattering of Lloyds brokers.

By an oversight, Stewart-Brown's eldest daughter was born on St Patrick's Day in 1980 and he had to miss the first two days. But, after 25 years, the routine is well rehearsed.

Up as early as the previous night will allow, study form, hearty breakfast, onto the coach, Arkle Bar by 11.30, meet on the grass before each race, back home via a pub or two, dinner, same again. Ask how the Festival has changed down the years and he will lament the passing of the old tables in the Arkle Bar. "People used to try to jump over them," he says. "It was great fun."

Stewart-Brown is one of an increasingly rare breed of old-boy sportsmen for whom winning and losing is incidental to the much more serious business of having fun. Not that enjoyment precludes a raging competitive spirit nor mixed sporting ability dents a disarming confidence.

CHELTENHAM 97 FESTIVAL

Playing in the pro-am event at the Greater Greensboro Open in North Carolina recently, he strode onto the first tee with his 18 handicap to inform his professional partner in prefectorial tones that he had not come all the way from the City of London to mess about. "Oh, and by the way," he added, "I gather you Americans have borrowed a piece of silverware which rightly belongs across the pond."

The printable gist of the reply by Lanny Wadkins, defending United States Ryder Cup captain and one of the most patriotic and combustible competitors on the US PGA Tour, was: "We've got the cup and we're gonna keep it." (He was wrong.) But the odd couple of London insurance broker and grizzled southern pro won the tournament anyway, 17 under par.

The same panache touches Stewart-Brown's racing. His feat of leading in a winner at Royal Ascot (Sergeyev in the Jersey Stakes) and the Festival (Deep Sensation in the 1993 Queen Mother Chase) puts him in exclusive company, alongside Sheikh Mohammed.

He bought his first horse from Tony Dickinson 12 years ago on the coldest day in Yorkshire for 30 years. "Do you take idiot southern owners?" he asked. Dickinson did and the appropriately named Arctic Call won the 1990 Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup. He owns 14 horses now, 12 National Hunt and two on the Flat.

Stewart-Brown recalled: "My father had horses when we were in India and there was always racing chat around the family. I was deeply in love with Persian War. In fact, I've had much more luck with the Champion Hurdle in terms of backing winners: Night Nurse, Monksfield, Lanzarote, so many wonderful horses have won the race.

"In the summer now when my horses come back to our paddocks for the holidays, I sit on a bank and watch them at play. About eight o'clock when it's getting dark, they start to take the mick out of each other and you can see the different characters. I love them."

If all goes to plan next week, Large Action will shoulder his owner's love of a challenge with a formidable tilt at the Champion Hurdle on Tuesday and the Stayers' Hurdle two days later. "He's a tough sod, so if anyone can do it, he can," he said. Large Action deserves a change of fortune in the championship after being deprived of victory two years ago by Alderbrook's breathtaking late surge up the hill.

Stewart-Brown said: "We thought we had been beaten by Danoli and that was the one thing I'd told Jamie Osborne couldn't happen because we would never get in the winner's enclosure. Jamie came in and said: 'Well, Brian, I did what you said.' And we had a good laugh and a great party afterwards. Pity we didn't have the cup on the bar, but maybe this time."

Not that it will matter much. For men like Stewart-Brown, Cheltenham inspires more lasting pleasures than mere victory or defeat. "Cheltenham is sacrosanct. It's the one week of the year struck out of my business diary.

"Cheltenham Man? I don't think so. I'm just one of a group of friends who are Cheltenham mad and want a good excuse to go back to our youths."

GERRY CRANHAM

Stewart-Brown looks admiringly at Large Action, who carries his hopes of winning the Champion Hurdle

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S FOUR MEETINGS

Sandown Park

Going: good

2.00 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, SIR DANTE (D O'Sullivan, 11-2); 2, Museum (X Aizpuru, 9-2); 3, Shahrani (Jamie Evans, 7-1) ALSO RAN: 4-1 jt-fav Jakes Justice, Otto E Mezzo (5th), 9-2 Regal Pursuit (6th), 12 Whispering Dawn (f), 33 Premier League (4th). 8 ran. 6l, 2½l, 2l, 1½l, 8l. R Rowe at Storrington. Tote: £8.10; £1.80, £1.80, £2.60. DF: £13.40. CSF: £28.12. Tricast: £159.45.

2.35 (3m 110yd ch) 1, PARLIAMENTARIAN (J A McCarthy, 16-1); 2, Ekeus (J Culloty, 9-2). ALSO RAN: 10-11 fav Eulogy (f), 9-4 Funcheon Gale (pu), 66 Victory Gale (pu). 5 ran. NR: Little Rowley, Oneofus. 16l. T Casey at Upper Lambourn. Tote: £8.50; £2.10, £1.30. DF: £13.80. CSF: £69.53.

3.10 (3m 110yd ch) 1, ACT THE WAG (Captain A Ogden, 10-11 fav); 2, Jultara (Major G Wheeler, 8-1); 3, Maxxum Express (Major O Ellwood, 33-1). ALSO RAN: 9-2 Cardinal Richelieu (4th), Duhallow Lodge (5th), 10 Kendal Cavalier (f), 50 Icantelya (pu), Toddling Inn (pu), 66 Gunner Stream (f), Vancouver Lad (pu). 10 ran. ½l, 18l, dist, 22l. M Todhunter at Ulverston. Tote: £1.90; £1.20, £1.90, £3.50. DF: £7.30. Trio: £34.30. CSF: £8.47.

3.45 (2m 6f hdle) 1, FRIENDSHIP (R Dunwoody, 11-4); 2, Millersford (W Marston, 14-1); 3, Emerald Statement (B Fenton, 10-11 fav). ALSO RAN: 8 Jack Gallagher, 9 Jazzman (4th), 16 Scenic Waters (5th), 25 Camera Man, 66 Mister Generosity (pu), Music Class (6th). 9 ran. NR: Fathlegg, Imperial Honors, Spirit Of Success. ¾l, 2½l, 7l, 12l, 18l. N Henderson at Lambourn. Tote: £3.70; £1.40, £2.40, £1.30. DF: £24.10. Trio: £13.90. CSF: £35.88.

4.15 (3m 110yd ch) 1, BRACKENFIELD (Captain D Alers-Hankey, 4-5 fav); 2, Across The Card (Capt W Ramsay, 14-1); 3, Over The Edge (Mr S Sporborg, 3-1). ALSO RAN: 7 True Steel (4th), 16 American Eyre (pu), No Joker (5th), 33 Golden Mac (ur). 7 ran. 26l, 13l, 6l, 4l. R Barber at Beaminster. Tote: £1.90; £1.60, £4.70. DF: £10.80. CSF: £11.99.

4.45 (2m 6f hdle) 1, SWING QUARTET (C Llewellyn, 14-1); 2, Jefferies (N Williamson, 2-1 fav); 3, Indian Quest (W Marston, 8-1). ALSO RAN: 11-4 Mirador, 6 Wings Cove, 13-2 Fortunes Course (5th), 12 Smuggler's Point (4th), 33 Court Nap (6th). 8 ran. NR: Texan Baby. Nk, 15l, 1½l, 10l, ½l. N Twiston-Davies at Cheltenham. Tote: £17.00; £2.30, £1.10, £2.50. DF: £15.90. Trio: £73.80. CSF: £40.33. Tricast: £227.44.

Jackpot: £7,100.00 (0.09 winning tickets. Pool of £6,399.86 carried forward to Sandown Park today).

Placepot: £165.20. Quadpot: £3.40.

Exeter

Going: good to soft

1.45 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, FONT ROMEU (A P McCoy, 4-6 fav); 2, Foxies Lad (10-1); 3, Crandon Boulevard (7-2). ALSO RAN: 12 Mystic Hill (4th). 11 ran. NR: Aqua Star. 7l, nk. M Pipe. Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £3.00, £1.10. DF: £8.90. Trio: £5.80. CSF: £7.83.

2.15 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, GIVE AND TAKE (A P McCoy, 11-10 fav); 2, Solazzi (100-1); 3, Steer Point (33-1). ALSO RAN: 100 Spirit Level (4th). 11 ran. 14l, 16l. M Pipe. Tote: £2.50; £1.90, £6.20, £2.00. DF: £259.30. Trio: £152.80. CSF: £110.62.

2.50 (2m 7f 110yd ch) 1, BEAR CLAW (J Osborne, 5-2); 2, Malwood Castle (20-1); 3, Indian Delight (8-1). ALSO RAN: 9-4 fav Carole's Crusader. 11 ran. 13l, . O Sherwood. Tote: £3.20; £2.00, £19.40, £1.50. DF: £31.80. Trio: £19.70. CSF: £47.46. Caroles Crusader finished second, but after a stewards' inquiry was disqualified for taking the wrong course.

3.25 (2m 2f ch) 1, BISHOPS CASTLE (J Frost, 6-1); 2, Alpine Song (33-1); 3, After The Fox (3-1 jt-fav). ALSO RAN: 3-1 jt-fav Amber Spark, 20 Indian Temple (4th). 10 ran. NR: Super Ritchart. ½l, 9l. R Frost. Tote: £8.70; £2.00, £4.80, £1.50. DF: £137.30. Trio: £86.40 (part won. Pool of £98.63 carried forward to 4.05 at Sandown Park today). CSF: £149.99. Tricast: £614.44.

3.55 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, COOL GUNNER (C Maude, 13-8 fav; Private Handicapper's top rating); 2, Devon Peasant (5-1); 3, Friendly House (6-1). ALSO RAN: 7 Trouvaille (4th). 6 ran. 3l, 12l. J King. Tote: £2.20; £1.10, £2.80. DF: £8.90. CSF: £9.94.

4.30 (2m 3f 110yd ch) 1, LANCE ARMSTRONG (D Fortt, 2-1 fav); 2, Mammy's Choice (7-1); 3, Shining Light (9-4). 4 ran. 1¼l, nk. G McCourt. Tote: £2.40. DF: £8.70. CSF: £11.60.

5.00 (3m 2f hdle) 1, MENESONIC (P Henley, 9-4); 2, Scotby (6-1); 3, Spaceage Gold (10-1). ALSO RAN: 7-4 fav Kind Cleric, 33 Coole Cherry (4th). 16 ran. 5l, 2½l. R Alner. Tote: £3.20; £1.50, £2.70, £3.60. DF: £25.00. Trio: £48.00. CSF: £15.66.

Placepot: £129.20. Quadpot: £35.50.

Ayr

Going: soft, good to soft in places

1.50 (2m hdle) 1, Derannie (A Dobbin, 5-6 fav); 2, Carlisle Bandito's (9-2); 3, La Riviera (25-1). 11 ran. 14l, 3l. G Richards. Tote: £2.00; £1.30, £1.80, £5.10. DF: £4.30. Trio: £34.20. CSF: £4.35.

2.20 (2m ch) 1, Singing Sand (A Dobbin, 8-1); 2, Real Tonic (1-2 fav); 3, Corston Joker (25-1). 6 ran. 27l, 28l. P Monteith. Tote: £7.50; £3.50, £3.20. DF: £4.10. CSF: £11.66.

2.55 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, Tribune (M Foster, 2-1 fav); 2, Leading Prospect (20-1); 3, Bang In Trouble (9-1). 8 ran. 6l, 22l. C Thornton. Tote: £3.60; £1.70, £3.60, £2.30. DF: £32.90. CSF: £33.46. Tricast: £265.46.

3.30 (2m 4f ch) 1, Disco Des Mottes (P Carberry, 8-13 fav); 2, Solba (3-1); 3, Twin Falls (9-1). 5 ran. 23l, 1l. G Richards. Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £1.80. DF: £2.60. CSF: £3.00.

4.00 (3m 5f 110yd ch) 1, Denim Blue (Miss P Robson, 9-4 fav); 2, Woody Dare (11-2); 3, Frozen Stiff (5-2). 7 ran. 21l, 8l. Miss P Robson. Tote: £2.60; £1.20, £3.00. DF: £10.10. CSF: £13.70.

4.35 (2m hdle) 1, Phar Echo (M Foster, 5-2 fav); 2, Jervaulx (9-1); 3, Solsgirth (7-2). 8 ran. ½l, 2l. L Lungo. Tote: £3.30; £1.10, £1.50, £1.60. DF: £13.40. CSF: £23.72. Tricast: £73.55.

Placepot: £13.80. Quadpot: £7.30.

Market Rasen

Going: good, good to soft in patches

1.40 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, Spitfire Bridge (D Bridgwater, 7-4 fav); 2, Summer Villa (9-2); 3, Oakbury (5-1). 8 ran. NR: Just For A Reason. 1½l, 3½l. G McCourt. Tote: £2.20; £1.40, £1.90, £1.10. DF: £5.30. Trio: £12.60. CSF: £9.40. Tricast: £29.26.

2.10 (3m 1f ch) 1, Mr Boston (Mr S Swiers, 4-11 fav); 2, Carly Brin (7-1); 3, Matt Reid (4-1). 5 ran. 20l, 7l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £1.20; £1.20, £1.30. DF: £2.60. CSF: £3.42.

2.45 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, Belmarita (Michael Brennan, 11-1); 2, Fairly Sharp (6-4 fav); 3, Sir Clerks (7-2). 17 ran. ½l, 8l. G Hubbard. Tote: £13.00; £2.90, £1.50, £1.90. DF: £11.40. Trio: £6.00. CSF: £26.14.

3.20 (2m 5f 110yd hdle) 1, Sassiver (K Gaule, 11-2); 2, Thursday Night (4-1); 3, La Fontainbleau (33-1). No Fiddling 5-2 fav. 11 ran. NR: Desert Force. 2½l, 3l. P Kelleway. Tote: £6.20; £2.30, £1.50, £5.40. DF: £16.80. Trio: £202.40 (part won. Pool of £202.46 carried forward to 4.05 at Sandown Park today). CSF: £25.44. Tricast: £611.03.

3.50 (2m 4f ch) 1, Gaelic Blue (R Guest, 6-1); 2, Golden Hello (11-10 fav); 3, Gorby's Myth (10-1). 10 ran. 3l, sh hd. Mrs S Smith. Tote: £5.90; £1.50, £1.20, £2.40. DF: £5.20. Trio: £5.40. CSF: £12.00.

4.25 (2m 1f 110yd ch) 1, Netherby Said (R Supple, 5-4 fav); 2, Dual Image (9-4); 3, Record Lover (12-1). 5 ran. 4l, 30l. P Beaumont. Tote: £2.20; £1.50, £1.40. DF: £2.70. CSF: £4.23.

4.55 (1m 5f 110yd flat) 1, Bossie Browne (R Guest, 8-1); 2, Classic Jenny (12-1); 3, Stonesby (8-1). The Gnome 7-2 jt-fav. 18 ran. 6l, 3l. G Hubbard. Tote: £9.50; £2.40, £2.70, £3.90. DF: £19.10. Trio: £168.60 (part won. Pool of £125.88 carried forward to 4.50 at Sandown Park today). CSF: £107.42.

Placepot: £7.60. Quadpot: £4.50.

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MAKE 12 SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS

01 Damon Hill
02 Michael Schumacher
03 Jacques Villeneuve
04 Eddie Irvine
05 Jean Alesi
06 Gerhard Berger
07 Mika Hakkinen
08 David Coulthard
09 Rubens Barrichello
10 Heinz-Harald Frentzen
11 Johnny Herbert
12 Mika Salo

13 Olivier Panis
14 Jos Verstappen
15 Ukyo Katayama
16 Pedro Diniz
17 Ricardo Rosset
18 Ralf Schumacher
19 Giancarlo Fisichella
20 Shinji Nakano
21 Nicola Larini
22 Jarno Trulli
23 Jan Magnussen
24 Vincenzo Sospiri

25 Williams
26 Ferrari
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AYR

THUNDERER

1.50 Son Of Anshan. 2.20 Celtic Giant. 2.50 Clever Boy. 3.25 Mr Knitwit. 4.00 Elation. 4.30 Ask Me Later. 5.00 Mac's Supreme.

GOING: SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.50 CRAIGIE JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,135: 2m) (7 runners)

1	6002	DOUBLE DASH 14 (V,F) D Moffatt 11-4	D J Moffatt
2	321F	SON OF ANSHAN 53 (D,BF,G) Mrs A Swinbank 11-4	J Supple
3		BOURBON DYNASTY 250F G Richards 10-12	A Dobbin
4	200P	CRABBIE'S PRIDE 29 [illegible] 10-12	R Guest
5	P	JUNGLE FRESH 22 Mrs D Thomson 10-12	B Storey
6	54	KNOWN SECRET 14 P Monteith 10-12	M Moloney
7	33	PHANTOM HAZE 28 C Parker 10-12	D Parker

6-4 Son Of Anshan, 3-1 Phantom Haze, 6-1 Bourbon Dynasty, 7-1 Double Dash, 8-1 Crabbie's Pride, 12-1 Known Secret, 16-1 Jungle Fresh.

2.20 MAD MARCH HARE NOVICES CHASE
(£2,924: 3m 1f) (6)

1	-401	KALAJO 8 (D,F,S) B Mactaggart 7-11-9	B Storey
2	-163	MAJORITY MAJOR 22 (G,S) P Cheesbrough 8-11-9	A Dobbin
3	U122	NICHOLAS PLANT 12 (C,BF,F,S) J Goldie 8-11-9	G Cahill
4	-F25	CELTIC GIANT 33 (S) L Lungo 7-11-9	R Supple
5	0-	ROYAL BANKER 550 M Todhunter 7-11-2	P Niven
6	3P1-	STRATHMORE LODGE 416 (S) Miss L Russell 8-10-12	M Foster

6-4 Celtic Giant, 9-4 Nicholas Plant, 5-1 Majority Major, 8-1 Royal Banker, 10-1 Strathmore Lodge, 12-1 Kalajo.

2.50 MASON ORGANISATION NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(£3,652: 3m 110yd) (8)

1	2214	SWANBISTER 12 (CD,G,S) L Lungo 7-12-0	R Supple
2	3613	ADIB 25 (B,CD,G,S) G Moore 7-11-3	N Bentley
3	132P	BELLE ROSE 38 (F,G) G Richards 7-10-12	A Dobbin
4	5020	KINGS LANE 21 (G) J Dun 8-10-10	D Parker
5	3062	CLEVER BOY 23 (G) J Dun 6-10-7	R Guest
6	2053	CHERRY DEE 10 P Beaumont 6-10-3	B Grattan (5)
7	2-00	CRASHBALLOO 78 P Cheesbrough 6-10-2	G Cahill
8	43-0	STEPDAUGHTER 30 Mrs D Thomson 11-10-0	L O'Hara

5-2 Swanbister, 7-2 Adib, 5-1 Cherry Dee, 6-1 Belle Rose, Clever Boy, 8-1 Kings Lane, 12-1 others.

3.25 HUGH BARCLAY CHALLENGE CUP
(Handicap chase: £3,493: 2m) (4)

1	4212	MR KNITWIT 25 (C,G) P Monteith 10-12-0	A Dobbin
2	1122	BOLD BOSS 10 (CD,BF,G,S) G Moore 8-11-12	B Storey
3	3P32	COQUI LANE 22 (BF,G,S) J Dun 10-10-4	D Parker
4	356P	TEEJAY'N'AITCH 25 J Goldie 5-10-0	G Cahill

10-11 Mr Knitwit, 5-4 Bold Boss, 6-1 Coqui Lane, 20-1 Teejay'N'Aitch.

4.00 AYRSHIRE YEOMANRY CUP HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,924: 2m 4f) (8)

1	F410	OAT COUTURE 15 (CD,G,S) L Lungo 9-12-0	R Supple
2	-411	INGLETONIAN 8 (G,S) B Mactaggart 8-11-13	B Storey
3	0652	ELATION 8 (F,G) G Richards 5-11-5	A Dobbin
4	/5/	LINNGATE 770 (C,G,S) L Lungo 8-11-5	M Foster
5	5134	FIELD OF VISION 8 (F,G) Mrs A Swinbank 7-11-1	J Supple
6	14-3	JUBRAN 164 (D,F) J Dodds 11-10-6	R Guest
7	F0-1	BRUMON 78 (V,S) D Moffatt 6-10-3	D J Moffatt
8	/P	STINGRAY CITY 14 (F,G) R McKellar 8-10-0	D Parker

11-4 Ingletonian, 7-2 Oat Couture, 4-1 Jubran, 6-1 Field Of Vision, 7-1 Brumon, 8-1 Linngate, 10-1 others.

4.30 POLYFLOR HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,548: 3m 1f) (7)

1	3534	DARK OAK 28 (C,D,F,G,S) J Chris 11-12-0	R Guest
2	F425	KILCOLGAN 21 (CD,F,S) Mrs J Goodfellow 10-11-8	N Bentley
3	-P34	VILLAGE REINDEER 12 (F,G,S) P Calver 10-11-4	T Reed
4	0P-0	BARNEY RUBBLE 78 (CD,G,S) D Whillans 12-10-10	D Bentley
5	0651	FARNEY GLEN 11 (F,G,S) J J O'Neill 10-10-6	A Dobbin
6	-421	ASK ME LATER 22 (G,S) Mrs S Bradburne 8-10-4	M Foster
7	PF44	FUNNY OLD GAME 25 (C,S) D McCune 10-10-0	Michael Brennan (3)

5-4 Farney Glen, 5-1 Dark Oak, Ask Me Later, 6-1 Kilcolgan, 7-1 Village Reindeer, 10-1 Barney Rubble, 16-1 Funny Old Game.

5.00 AYR STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,035: 2m) (9)

1	3-1	LORD PODGSKI 42 (CD,G) P Monteith 6-11-11	A Dobbin
2	51	MAC'S SUPREME 22 (D,G) F Murphy 5-11-11	Michael Brennan (3)
3	0	LORD KNOWS 22 J Charlton 6-11-4	K Johnson
4		ABOVE THE GRASS D Robertson 6-10-13	F Perratt
5		HIGH CELLESTE M Todhunter 6-10-13	C McCormack (7)
6		AMLWCH J Berry 4-10-10	M Moloney
7		CASTLE CLEAR Mrs M Reveley 4-10-10	P Niven
8		MINISIOUX C Thornton 4-10-10	N Horrocks (7)
9		MEGGIE SCOTT J Dodds 4-10-5	R Guest

5-2 Lord Podgski, 3-1 Mac's Supreme, 4-1 Castle Clear, 6-1 High Celleste, Amlwch, 7-1 Minisioux, 16-1 Lord Knows, 20-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: G Richards, 49 winners from 191 runners, 25.7%; Mrs M Reveley, 38 from 161, 23.6%; C Thornton, 5 from 25, 20.0%; J J O'Neill, 20 from 106, 19.9%; D Whillans, 3 from 16, 18.8%; C Parker, 18 from 109, 16.5%.

JOCKEYS: R Supple, 8 winners from 32 rides, 25.0%; P Niven, 34 from 150, 22.7%; A Dobbin, 32 from 161, 19.9%; J Supple, 5 from 29, 17.2%; G Cahill, 11 from 71, 15.5%; B Storey, 26 from 179, 14.5%; M Moloney, 8 from 67, 11.9%.

Tribune makes it four

TRIBUNE recorded his fourth victory in succession at Ayr yesterday to earn a trip to Ascot later this month. His trainer, Chris Thornton, nominated the Alpine Meadow Handicap Hurdle at Ascot on March 26 as a probable target after the 2-1 favourite had won James Barclay Memorial Handicap Hurdle by six lengths from Leading Prospect.

WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER

2.10 Ramsey Hope. 2.40 Cyrian. 3.15 Foot Battalion. 3.45 Chemcast. 4.15 State Of Caution. 4.50 Chilling. 5.25 Calendula.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 4.15 World Premier. 5.25 **CALENDULA** (nap).

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

2.10 MANNY BERNSTEIN HANDICAP
(Div I: £4,481: 5f) (9 runners)

1	1-26	BOLD EFFORT 8 (V,BF,F,G,S) K Cunningham-Brown 5-9-10	T Quinn 8
2	3401	RAMSEY HOPE 9 (V,CD,F,G) C Fairhurst 4-8-13	K Fallon 7
3	50-3	SING WITH THE BAND 17 (D,F,G) B McMahon 6-8-10	L Newton 9
4	2211	KALAR 35 (B,CD,F,G) D Chapman 8-8-9	A Culhane 6
5	00-5	KIRA 15 (CD,F,G) J Eyre 7-8-8	R Lappin 3
6	5232	BOLD FRONTIER 8 (B,CD,G) K Ivory 5-8-1	M J Dwyer (3) 5
7	050-	SO INTREPID 123 (C,D,F,G,S) J Bradley 7-8-1	L Charnock 1
8	50-0	SARIO 15 (D,G) A Bailey 4-8-0	D Wright 2
9	0055	RENNYHOLME 7 (V,CD,G) J Hetherton 6-7-10	J Bramhill (5) 4

5-2 Ramsey Hope, 7-2 Bold Frontier, 5-1 Bold Effort, 6-1 Sing With The Band, 7-1 Kalar, 8-1 Kira, 10-1 So Intrepid, 12-1 others.

2.40 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £3,420: 1m 100yd) (9)

1		CYRIAN P Cole 9-0	T Quinn 6
2	0-	MASTER BOBBY 93 R Boss 9-0	M Tebbutt 2
3	220-	SWISS COAST 171 N Tinkler 9-0	Kim Tinkler 5
4	636	WEET AND SEE 24 R Hollinshead 9-0	D Griffiths (5) 8
5	6	ALAGNA 16 S Williams 8-9	K Fallon 1
6	455-	BABY JANE 194 R Guest 8-9	M Wigham 9
7	000-	MANHATTAN DIAMOND 99 A Bailey 8-9	D Wright 7
8	03	SOLAR DAWN 9 M Johnston 8-9	D McKeown 4
9	06-	TAYOVULLIN 159 H Morrison 8-9	C Rutter 3

5-2 Solar Dawn, 3-1 Cyrian, 9-2 Swiss Coast, 5-1 Baby Jane, 7-1 Weet And See, 8-1 Master Bobby, 10-1 others.

3.15 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS CONDITIONS STAKES (£3,355: 1m 100yd) (6)

1	0-22	SABOT 31 (F) C Thornton 4-9-10	D McKeown 4
2	135-	SUEZ TORNADO 213 (D,G) E Alston 4-9-10	S Drowne 6
3	34-1	ZURS 35 (D,G) Miss G Kelleway 4-9-10	K Fallon 3
4	134-	BILLADDIE 387 (D,G) R Boss 4-9-5	M Tebbutt 2
5	6342	PATER NOSTER 10 (D,G,S) J A Harris 8-9-5	T Quinn 1
6	1032	FOOT BATTALION 3 (C,G) R Hollinshead 3-8-4	F Lynch (3) 5

7-4 Sabot, 5-2 Zurs, 9-2 Pater Noster, 5-1 Foot Battalion, 10-1 Billaddie, 12-1 Suez Tornado.

3.45 MANNY BERNSTEIN HANDICAP
(Div II: £4,457: 5f) (8)

1	15-1	CRETAN GIFT 8 (V,CD,F,G) N Littmoden 6-10-0	T G McLaughlin 1
2	053-	ANSELLMAN 106 (D,F,G,S) J Berry 7-9-0	G Carter 5
3	6126	ROBO MAGIC 14 (F,G) L Montague Hall 5-8-7	F Lynch (3) 6
4	0243	BROADSTAIRS BEAUTY 8 (D,F,G,S) D Shaw 7-8-4	J Fanning 2
5	63-1	THE HAPPY FOX 17 (CD,F,G) B McMahon 5-8-4	S Righton (7) 7
6	2260	CHEMCAST 17 (B,D,F,G) J Eyre 4-7-12	T Williams 8
7	366-	WEET EES GIRL 190 (D,G) P Evans 3-7-10	J F Egan 4
8	4030	SHADOW JURY 3 (B,CD,F,G,S) D Chapman 7-7-10	N Kennedy 3

11-4 Cretan Gift, 7-2 The Happy Fox, 9-2 Broadstairs Beauty, 6-1 Robo Magic, Shadow Jury, 8-1 Chemcast.

4.15 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS LINCOLN TRIAL (Handicap: £14,135: 1m 100yd) (13)

1	115-	THAI MORNING 91 (CD,F,G) P Harris 4-10-0	G Duffield 10
2	00-1	NEW CENTURY 10 (C,D,F,G) D Nicholls 5-9-11	Alex Greaves 9
3	500-	WORLD PREMIER 135 (F,G) C Brittain 4-9-9	K Fallon 7
4	-111	ROYAL ACTION 7 (CD,G) J Banks 4-9-7	M Wigham 5
5	400-	SHINEROLLA 393 (D,F,G) C Parker 5-9-1	D R McCabe 13
6	416-	KUALA LIPIS 218 (D,G) P Cole 4-9-0	T Quinn 11
7	011-	PERSIAN FAYRE 126 (D,F,G) J Berry 5-8-13	T E Durcan (5) 8
8	6416	DUKE VALENTINO 7 (CD,G) R Hollinshead 5-8-10	D Griffiths (5) 1
9	-131	STATE OF CAUTION 5 (B,G) D Shaw 4-8-9 (4ex)	J Fanning 6
10	160-	CAUDILLO 147 (D,G) Mrs P Duffield 4-8-8	S Drowne 4
11	2221	RAMBO WALTZER 8 (C,D,F,G,S) D Nicholls 5-8-6	Iona Wands (7) 12
12	1120	ANONYM 38 (B,CD,F,G) J Eyre 5-7-12	T Williams 3
13	316-	AMBER FORT 126 (V,G,S) D Elsworth 4-7-12	C Rutter 2

7-2 New Century, 5-1 Thai Morning, 6-1 Royal Action, 7-1 Persian Fayre, 8-1 Amber Fort, 10-1 Kuala Lipis, State Of Caution, 12-1 others.

4.50 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS WOLVERHAMPTON SELLING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £4,085: 6f) (9)

1	5554	CONTRAVENE 15 (C,D,F,G) J Berry 8-13	P Roberts (5) 2
2	-603	ADVANCE REPRO 32 (B,CD,F,G) J Akehurst 8-7	M Tebbutt 1
3	4151	CHILLING 10 (CD,G) N Tinkler 8-7	K Sked (7) 7
4	00-3	COLLEGE PRINCESS 10 C Dwyer 8-7	Jo Hunnam (7) 5
5	3326	JULIA'S RELATIVE 5 (B) R Guest 8-7	P Bloomfield 6
6	0-20	MY GIRL 24 R Hollinshead 8-7	F Lynch (3) 4
7	-230	PRETTY SALLY 15 D Murray Smith 8-7	G Duffield 3
8	36	QUALITAIR SILVER 5 J Bottomley 8-7	L Charnock 9
9	0142	WILL TO WIN 10 (C,G) P Murphy 8-7	S Drowne 8

2-1 Chilling, 5-2 Will To Win, 6-1 College Princess, 8-1 Advance Repro, 10-1 Julia's Relative, Pretty Sally, 12-1 others.

5.25 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS HANDICAP (£3,371: 1m 6f 166yd) (7)

1	3012	PETOSKIN 14 (CD,F,G,S) J Pearce 5-9-10	G Bardwell 1
2	00-5	BACKVIEW 15 (CD,G) B Llewellyn 5-9-2	L Charnock 2
3	-315	SHAKIYR 24 (B,CD,BF,G) R Hollinshead 6-9-0	F Lynch (3) 5
4	5434	PREMIER DANCE 15 (CD,F,G) D Haydn Jones 10-9-0	T Quinn 4
5	5121	CALENDULA 10 (C,G) D Morley 4-8-7	G Carter 6
6	211-	ONEFOURSEVEN 110 (F,G) J Eyre 4-8-7	T Williams 3
7	340-	AZTEC FLYER 157 [illegible] 4-7-13	Dale Gibson 7

7-4 Calendula, 7-2 Onefourseven, 5-1 Petoskin, 6-1 Shakiyr, 7-1 Backview, 8-1 Premier Dance, 12-1 Aztec Flyer.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: J Banks, 7 winners from 21 runners, 33.3%; M Johnston, 46 from 201, 22.9%; P [illegible] 30.5%; J Pearce, 9 from 48, 18.8%; C Dwyer, 8 from [illegible], 13.7%; J Bottomley, 4 from 22, 18.2%; N Tinkler, 4 from 22, 18.2%.

JOCKEYS: K Sked, 3 winners from 12 rides, 25.0%; Alex Greaves, 9 from 54, 16.7%; [illegible] 6 from 36, 16.7%; R Lappin, 8 from 51, 15.7%; G Carter, 31 from 213, 14.6%; M J Dwyer, 3 from 21, 14.3%.

[illegible]

[illegible]

RACING: CHANNON-TRAINED HURDLER OFFERS EXCELLENT EACH-WAY VALUE IN IMPERIAL CUP

Danegold to pay handsome dividend

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

THE Sunderlands Imperial Cup, a traditional appetiser for next week's Cheltenham feast, serves up a fascinating choice for punters at Sandown today. *Should they trust their* eyes or the form book in the search for the winner?

Those who saw More Dash Thancash make a field of handicappers resemble carthorses when winning at Doncaster seven days ago will be *tempted to back* the fast improving Merrita Jones-trained runner to follow up.

MARTIN LYNCH

More Dash Thancash seeks a fourth consecutive victory in the Sunderlands Imperial Cup at Sandown today

An even more eye-catching victory by Doctoor at Sandown three weeks ago — which came 12 days after the horse's conditional jockey was suspended for four days under the non-triers' rule at Chepstow — left onlookers with the strong impression there was bags of improvement left in the Martin Pipe-trained winner.

Not surprisingly, both horses have been in demand since the ante-post prices came out earlier this week. The pair have solid claims, although it is possible to pick holes in their achievements. Doctoor's success, in a five-runner race, was gained in a particularly slow time, while More Dash Thancash's hurdling left something to desired.

While the two market leaders are clearly on the upgrade, there are four other runners *with form every bit as good* and who will be on offer at longer prices.

Mr Percy has done little wrong this term, winning twice at the right-handed Huntingdon track before recording his best performance behind Shadow Leader at Newbury four weeks ago. In a race dominated down the years by five- and six-year-olds with a light weight, Forestal still looks on a fair mark after winning a competitive Cheltenham handicap.

Paul Webber has his string in top form and Carlito Brigante will relish today's sounder surface after winning well on unsuitably heavy ground at Wetherby ten days ago. However, the runner that is hugely over-priced at 20-1 with William Hill and arguably possesses the best form credentials is Danegold.

The Mick Channon-trained five-year-old was rather disappointing on the Flat last year, having won four races as a three-year-old, including a Sandown handicap. However, he has taken well to hurdling and, *after a couple of sighters,* he comfortably landed a novice event at Windsor.

However, the form which gives him a cracking each-way chance here came at Cheltenham six weeks ago when he finished third, beaten just over *six lengths, to Boardroom* Shuffle, who runs in the Champion Hurdle on Tuesday. In a fast-run race, he had every chance at the last and the form looks solid with the winner and fourth-placed Rangitikei having won since at Newbury.

Richard Hughes has ridden the horse in four of his five career wins and with the stylish dual purpose jockey on board again today, **Danegold** is a sporting nap.

Away from the gaze of the television cameras, **Ask Me Later** looks to be on a winning mark in the Polyflor Handicap Chase at Ayr (4.30). Unlike novice hurdlers, novice chasers are often leniently treated in handicaps and the way in which Susan Bradburne's eight-year-old won at Newcastle three weeks ago suggests he can follow up off his light weight. The form of his recent win was boosted when the runner-up, River Unshion, won at Wetherby recently.

Working week, page 27

Graham Bradley was banned for seven days after taking the wrong course at Exeter yesterday. Bradley, on Carole's Crusader in the novices' chase, went the wrong side of the fourth-last fence, which had been dolled off.

Jovie King can further reward shrewd Buckler

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

CHEPSTOW
BBC1

1.15: **Selatan** *showed enough* last time to merit the vote. David Gandolfo's representative weakened on the run-in at Haydock but should be sharper now. Although Potentate loves this track, he looks harshly handicapped. *The same applies to Marius,* while Lake Kariba might prefer a stiffer test. The danger is Kingdom Of Shades, who may have found the ground too quick when disappointing at Haydock most recently.

1.45: **Giventime** can make the most of a significant weight concession from General Wolfe. Andy Turnell's gelding, who holds Spuffington on a recent encounter, thrives on soft ground and has winning form over the course and distance. An easy surface is a must for Belmont King, who beat Trying Again over this course three months ago. Although stamina is his forte, he faces a stiffer task from a 7lb higher mark. Buckboard Bounce and Bishops Hall, both returning after lengthy absences, are being aimed at the Grand National.

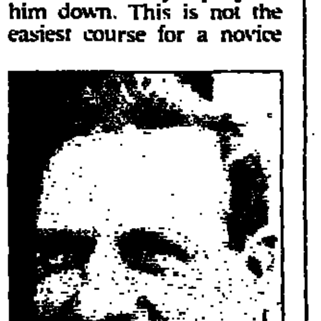
2.15: What's The Verdict has won both his starts over hurdles without suggesting he is out of the ordinary. There should again be little between Break The Rules and Royal Scimitar on recent Haydock running. They have prospects but preference is for **Motoqua**, an in-form mare from an in-form stable. Her ability to stay beyond two miles is an asset in this competitive race.

Julian Muscat

SANDOWN PARK
CHANNEL 4

2.55: **Jovie King** arguably needs to improve to win here, but there are sound reasons for thinking he is up to the task. After making his debut over hurdles, the five-year-old was bought by Bob Buckler on the recommendation of Brendan Powell, and he showed much improved form to win a small race at Fontwell last month. He was not fully wound up on that occasion and his shrewd trainer expects considerable improvement, especially on decent ground. Colossus Of Roads looks the main danger. The winner of two races in 1995, he missed last season but ran creditably *behind More Dash Thancash* on his reappearance at Windsor three weeks ago.

3.30: With Paul Webber's horses in cracking form, **Scottish Bambi** gets the vote. Best on right-handed tracks, he did well to defy top weight when winning a handicap at Leicester 11 days ago and the form was boosted when Chill Wind, the runner-up, won at Carlisle on Thursday. Blair Castle was sent off favourite to beat Sublime Fellow at Doncaster last Saturday but, not for the first time, his jumping let him down. This is not the easiest course for a novice and Sublime Fellow looks the main danger.



Turnell: Chepstow chance

4.05: see left.

4.40: Aardwolf has solid claims judged on his early season form, but has slightly lost his way. Full Of Fire returns after an 80-day absence and **Denver Bay** is preferred. He relished the step up in trip over course and distance last time when outbattling Hill Of Tullow, with the third horse more than 20 lengths away. The *ten-year-old jumped* particularly well that day and looks capable of following up off a 4lb higher mark. Equity Player, who should appreciate the stiff finish, is not out of it.

Richard Evans

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: DANEGOLD
(4.05 Sandown Park)
Next best: *Ask Me Later*
(4.30 Ayr)

SANDOWN PARK

THUNDERER

1.55 Electric Committee
2.25 Hurricane Lamp
2.55 Kelly Mac
3.30 Scottish Bambi
4.05 ***CARLITO BRIGANTE*** (nap)
4.40 Aardwolf
5.15 Desert Way

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating:
2.25 HURRICANE LAMP.

Carl Evans: 1.55 Mister Main Man.

GOING: GOOD   TOTE JACKPOT MEETING   SIS

1.55 DICK McCREERY HUNTERS CHASE
(Amateurs: £2,684: 2m 4f 110yd) (6 runners)

101	F41RF-4	HICKELTON LAD 31 (D,F,G) D Williams 13-12-6	Major S J Robinson (7)	[illegible]
102	PP-P2	ARCHIES OATS 6P (S) (J Trice-Rolph) J Trice-Rolph 8-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (5)	—
103	2322-	BERRINGS DASHER 296 (F) (J Aylon) Mrs J Richardson 10-12-0	M Watson (7)	90
104	2-RRF	ELECTRIC COMMITTEE 14P (G) (J Kearsley) A Wood 7-12-0	Captain A Wood (7)	—
105	523-1	MISTER MAIN MAN 14P (F,G,S) (C Keswick) C Sporborg 9-12-0	S Sporborg (7)	—
106	PPP-P2	*TAUREAN TYCOON 6P (F,G,S) (D Williams) D Williams 13-12-0*	*Major O Ellwood (7)*	—

BETTING: 6-4 Mister Main Man, 4-1 Taurean Tycoon, 9-2 Hickelton Lad, 6-1 Archies Oats, 7-1 Berrings Dasher, 10-1 Electric Committee.

1996: THE MAJOR GENERAL 8-11-7 Captain A Ogden (15-8 fav) G Richards 5 ran

2.25 BUSHY PARK NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,957: 2m 110yd) (13 runners)

201	16-112	HURRICANE LAMP 43 (CD,BF,G,S) (F Welch) D Nicholson 6-11-12	A Thornton	[illegible]
202	1/515	DONNINGTON 28 (D,BF,F,G) (B Stewart-Brown) O Sherwood 7-11-7	J Osborne	87
203	102-14P	SOUNDS LIKE FUN 42 (F,G) (Mrs H Brown) Miss H Knight 6-11-7	J F Titley	72
204	006	CALM DOWN 15 (Mrs A Wales) T Casey 6-11-2	D Bridgwater	75
205	U0-000	HUSH 15 (S Tindall) G Charles-Jones 6-11-2	Mr A Charles-Jones	65
206		KNOCK STAR (J Maris) R Champion 6-11-2	J Railton	—
207	3-01452	LIVELY ENCOUNTER 22 (S) (F Salesbury) Mrs M Jones 6-11-2	D Byrne	84
208	6-24522	NEAT FEAT 29 (F) (Food Brokers) D Elsworth 6-11-2	P Holley	82
209	000P-FP	STARLIGHT FOOL 30 (G) (S Bown) K Bailey 6-11-2	W McFarland	—
210	03/0	THE FLYING DOCTOR 28 (Rumble Racing) G Balding 7-11-2	B Fenton	—
211	2-	TOM PINCH 415 (Mrs D Claessen-Brieston) G Balding 8-11-2	R Greene	75
212	412-3F	WISE KING 21 (BF,G) (D Milne) J Old 7-11-2	G Upton	90
213	2-6	CLOSE HARMONY 21 (Queen Elizabeth) N Henderson 5-10-11	M A Fitzgerald	—

BETTING: 9-4 Hurricane Lamp, 3-1 Donnington, 6-1 Wise King, Lively Encounter, 9-1 Sounds Like Fun, 12-1 Close Harmony, Neat Feat, 14-1 others.

1996: HENRIETTA HOWARD 6-10-8 G Hogan (13-2) Mrs D Haine 15 ran

2.55 BARCLAYS BANK HANDICAP HURDLE
C4

(Amateurs: £4,065: 2m 110yd) (6 runners)

301	60213/3	COLOSSUS OF ROADS 21 (D,F,G) (D Wilson) T Thomson Jones 8-12-7	—	88
302	28-12P0	IRON N GOLD 15 (D,G) (D T Partners) T Casey 5-11-11	Major G Wheeler (7)	88
303	55-3654	KELLY MAC 21 (D,S) (Mrs V O'Brien) D O'Brien 7-11-10	Major O Ellwood (7)	91
304	01	*JOVIE KING 33 (F) (M Reid) R Buckler 5-11-10*	Captain D Alers-Hankey (7)	89
305	040-553	DESERT CALM 11F (R Fuller) P Evans 8-11-5	Mr J Fuller (7)	95
306	0/P2-043	BIGWHEEL BILL 16 (F,G) (Mrs D Stedman) J Jenkins 8-11-5	Miss V Haigh (7)	[illegible]

BETTING: 5-2 Jovie King, 3-1 Colossus Of Roads, 7-2 Kelly Mac, 6-1 Iron N Gold, 10-1 others.

1996: SOCIETY GUEST 10-11-3 Captain A Ogden (15-2) A Turnell 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

COLOSSUS OF ROADS 10½l 3rd of 9 to More Dash Than Cash in handicap hurdle at Windsor (2m, good) with KELLY MAC (7lb better off) 11½l 4th. *JOVIE KING beat Mullintor 3l in novice hurdle* at Fontwell (2m 2f, good to firm). DESERT CALM 8l 3rd to Dark Nightingale in handicap hurdle at Wincanton (2m, good to firm). BIGWHEEL BILL 9¾l 3rd to Sheriffmuir in handicap hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to soft).
Selection: KELLY MAC

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0   B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing: F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

3.30 BURNT OAK & SPECIAL CARGO NOVICES CHASE
C4

(£4,463: 2m) (6 runners)

401	1212P1	SCOTTISH BAMBI 11 (D,F,G,S) (W Kelly) P Webber 9-11-6	J Osborne	97
402	151461	*SUBLIME FELLOW 7 (D,F,G) (R McGrath) N Henderson 7-11-6*	*M A Fitzgerald*	95
403	32-F24U	BLAIR CASTLE 7 (BF,F) (Highflyers) G Balding 6-11-2	B Fenton	[illegible]
404	34P-3P5	CHEEKA 94 (D Thompson) C Smith 8-11-2	M Ranger	75
405	6PR523	HEATHYARDS BOY 44 (B,G,S) (L Morgan) D McCain 7-11-2	D Walsh	54
406	40/2642	JULIET JONES 11 (S) (J Plackett) J Gifford 8-10-11	L Aspell (3)	79

BETTING: 7-4 Blair Castle, 9-4 Sublime Fellow, 3-1 Scottish Bambi, 6-1 Juliet Jones, 14-1 others.

1996: LORD DORCET 6-11-10 A P McCoy (2-1) J Charlton 4 ran

FORM FOCUS

SCOTTISH BAMBI beat Chill Wind 4l in 8-runner *handicap chase at Leicester (2m 1f, good)*. SUBLIME FELLOW beat Just Bruce 3l in 7-runner novice chase at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good) with BLAIR CASTLE fell 5th. Earlier beat Formal Invitation 8l in 9-runner novice chase at Southwell (2m, good) with CHEEKA (3lb worse off) tailed off 5th. BLAIR CASTLE 23l last of 4 to Mulligan in grade II Michael Page Group Kingmaker Novices Chase at *Warwick (2m, good) penultimate start.* HEATHYARDS BOY about 32l 3rd of 4 to Flying Instructor in novice chase at Haydock (2m, good). JULIET JONES best effort when 8l 2nd of 7 to Lance Armstrong in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, good).
Selection: BLAIR CASTLE

4.05 SUNDERLANDS IMPERIAL CUP
C4

(Handicap hurdle: £21,456: 2m 110yd) (18 runners)

501	20-1435	SILVER GROOM 28 (CD,F,S) (Silver Darlings) R Akehurst 7-11-12	S Ryan (5)	96
502	4-16520	CHIEF'S SONG 28 (CD,F,G) (Mrs A Devine) S Dow 7-11-8	R Dunwoody	92
503	50-2010	KADASTROF 21 (D,G,S) (A Paton) R Dickin 7-11-8	X Aizpuru (7)	91
504	121132	LADY DAISY 14 (D,G) (P Kehoe) A Mullins (Ire) 8-11-7	G F Swan	92
505	360-312	STAR RAGE 14 (D,BF,F,G) (D Abell) J L Harris 7-11-7	D Gallagher	96
506	12315-F	SHANKAR 16 (D,BF,G,S) (International Plywood) D Nicholson 6-11-5	W Marston	92
507	06-3001	EXPRESS GIFT 22 (CD,G,S) (M Horner) Mrs M Reveley 8-11-4	N Williamson	90
508	614-F06	KINGSFOLD PET 14 (D,G,S) (Exors of G Nye) M Haynes 8-11-4	D Skyrme	95
509	1-11212	CHAI-YO 72 (D,G,S) ([illegible] Viney) J Old 7-11-0	G Upton	90
510	311411	SHINING EDGE 14 (D,F,G,S) (G Graham) T Easterby 5-11-0	G Bradley	96
511	5-11F32	MR PERCY 28 (D,F,G) (F Rosenstiel's Widow & Son) J Gifford 6-10-12	L Aspell (3)	95
512	13-3536	GROUND NUT 16 (D,F,S) (Mrs R Haskins) R Buckler 7-10-11	G Supple (5)	96
513	100/31	DOCTOOR 23 (CD,S) (A Walls) M Pipe 7-10-10	A P McCoy	94
514	21/3111	MORE DASH THANCASH 7 (D,F,G) (F Sainsbury) Mrs M Jones 7-10-6	D Byrne	[illegible]
515	311-341	FORESTAL 42 (D,G,S) (S Griffiths) S Griffiths 5-10-5	T J Murphy	94
516	244141	CARLITO BRIGANTE 10 (D,F,S) (Lady Bamford) P Webber 5-10-0	J Osborne	97
517	0-213	DANEGOLD 42 (V,D,G) (Circular Distributors) M Channon 5-10-0	R Hughes	89
518	535021	SAMANID 22 (D,F,G) (Magnum Construction) Mrs L Siddall 5-10-0	U Pears	89

Long handicap: Carlito Brigante 9-12, Danegold 9-11, Samanid 9-8

BETTING: 3-1 Doctoor, 6-1 More Dash Thancash, 7-1 Star Rage, 11-1 Shining Edge, Chai-Yo, 12-1 Lady Daisy, Carlito Brigante, Forestal, 14-1 others.

1996: AMANCIO 5-10-8 M A Fitzgerald (5-1) G Harwood 11 ran

FORM FOCUS

KADASTROF beat Ambleside 3l in 14-runner handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, good) penultimate start with DOCTOOR (8lb worse off) head 3rd. CHAI-YO 1¼l 2nd of 4 to Albemine in handicap hurdle at Kempton (2m, good to firm). Previously beat Kippanour 12l in 4-runner handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 1f, good) with FORESTAL (2lb worse off) every chance when fell last. SHINING EDGE beat STAR RAGE (2lb better off) 1¼l in 9-runner handicap hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). MR PERCY 4l 2nd of 15 to Shadow Leader in novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good). DOCTOOR beat Royal Event 5l in 5-runner conditionals handicap hurdle over course and distance (good to soft). MORE DASH THAN CASH beat Holders Hill 5l in 8-runner handicap hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). FORESTAL beat Bolivar 2½l in 14-runner handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 1f, good) with STAR RAGE (1lb better off) 4l 3rd and KADASTROF (2lb better off) 11½l 9th.
Selection: DOCTOOR (nap)

4.40 HAMBRO COUNTRYWIDE HANDICAP CHASE
C4

(£6,873: 3m 110yd) (7 runners)

601	P-113P3	AARDWOLF 15 (CD,G,S) (Lady Dempster) C Brooks 6-11-10	G Bradley	91
602	602264	MONTECOT 21 (S) (M Connell) S Mellor 8-11-2	D Gallagher	—
603	5P122-1	FULL OF FIRE 80 (D,F,S) (M Gilbey) K Bailey 10-11-1	A Thornton	[illegible]
604	02-6351	DENVER BAY 22 (CD,G,S) (B Naylor) J Gifford 10-11-1	L Aspell (3)	98
605	13U124	*SAMLEE 28 (D,F,G,S) (White Lion Partners) P Hobbs 8-10-11*	*D Bridgwater*	95
606	13322-1	EQUITY PLAYER 21 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs S Partners) R Curtis 12-10-3	D Morris	94
607	3/21/PP	TOP BRASS 21 (S) (Top Brass Partners) K Bailey 9-10-0	S McNeill	—

Long handicap: Top Brass 9-9.

BETTING: 9-4 Aardwolf, 7-2 Denver Bay, 9-2 Full Of Fire, 6-1 Samlee, Equity Player, 10-1 Montecot, 14-1 Top Brass.

1996: ARTHUR'S MINSTREL 9-11-0 R Johnson (13-8 fav) D Nicholson 5 ran

FORM FOCUS

AARDWOLF 7¾l 3rd of 6 to Berude Not To in novice chase at Kempton (2m, good). MONTECOT tailed off 4th of 5 to Air Shot in chase at Chepstow (3m 3f 110yd, soft). FULL OF FIRE beat Shining Light 1½l in 7-runner handicap chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, soft). DENVER BAY beat Hill Of Tullow head in 6-runner handicap chase over course and distance (good). SAMLEE 26½l 4th of 9 to Lord Gyllene in handicap chase at Uttoxeter (4m 2f, good). EQUITY PLAYER beat Big Ben Dun 12l in 6-runner handicap chase at Windsor (3m, good).
Selection: EQUITY PLAYER

5.15 H M S SANDOWN STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
(£1,406: 2m 110yd) (21 runners)

1		*BILLY BOX (A Tuckerman) G McCourt 5-11-4*	*D Bridgwater*	—
2	02	BORODINO 31 (Mrs P Cooper) R Rowe 5-11-4	L Aspell (3)	—
3		EAGLE DANCER (E Reitel) Lady Herries 5-11-4	R Dunwoody	—
4		EXPRESS AGAIN (T King) M Haynes 5-11-4	J Railton	—
5		GOLDEN EAGLE (P Oldfield) N Henderson 5-11-4	M A Fitzgerald	—
6		HOMME DE FER (Miss M Vencatagadoo) K Bailey 5-11-4	C Scudder (7)	—
7		KAPCO (Uplands Bloodstock) C Brooks 5-11-4	G Bradley	—
8		LIFT THE LATCH (G Payne) Mrs I McKie 5-11-4	L Harvey	—
9		LOVELY OUTLOOK (Mrs P Carson) R Carson 5-11-4	D Morris	—
10	0-R	MILL BAY SAM 7 (D Robbins) Mrs M Jones 6-11-4	D Byrne	—
11	6	MOONRAKER'S MIRAGE 16 (W Perry) D Elsworth 6-11-4	P Holley	—
12		SECURON GALE (Mrs R Proctor) N Henderson 5-11-4	J R Kavanagh	—
13	0	TATIBAG 98 (R Smith) R Smith 5-11-4	L Suthern (7)	—
14		TIMELY MAGIC (J Neville) J Neville 5-11-4	A P McCoy	—
15		PLUMPTON WOOD (D Stoddart) J Smyth-Osbourne 5-10-13	N Williamson	—
16		CLARE'S SPRING (Fieldspring Racing) R Hodges 4-10-10	T Dascombe (3)	—
17		DESERT WAY (Winton Bloodstock) Miss H Knight 4-10-10	J Culloty	—
18		FORTUNES FLIGHT (Mrs A Garrett) J King 4-10-10	T J Murphy	—
19		SATELLITE EXPRESS (Sharp Racing) B Smart 4-10-10	W Marston	—
20	30	SIR PRIZE 14 (M Jackson Bloodstock) G Balding 4-10-10	B Clifford	—
21		KABYLIE QUEST (A Paton) R Dickin 4-10-5	X Aizpuru (7)	—

BETTING: 7-2 Desert Way, 4-1 Golden Eagle, 5-1 Borodino, 6-1 Securon Gale, 7-1 Eagle Dancer, 8-1 Homme De Fer, 10-1 Kapco, 12-1 others.

1996: MARCHING MARQUIS 5-11-4 R Dunwoody (9-2) N Chance 22 ran

Course specialists

SANDOWN PARK: Trainers: D Nicholson, 31 winners from 90 runners, 34.4%; Mrs M Reveley, 7 from 24, 29.2%; J Old, 11 from 39, 28.2%; R Hodges, 6 from 27, 22.2%; Miss H Knight, 6 from 30, 20.0%; S Dow, 5 from 25, 20.0%. Jockeys: R Dunwoody, 31 from 105, 29.5%; J Railton, 3 from 14, 21.4%; Major O Ellwood, 3 *from 15, 20.0%; J Titley, 4 from 21, 19.0%; L Harvey, 4 from 22,* 18.2%; A P McCoy, 9 from 50, 18.0%.

CHEPSTOW: Trainers: D Nicholson, 16 winners from 55 runners, 29.1%; M Pipe, 51 from 197, 25.9%; J Old, 7 from 34, 20.6%; P Nicholls, 12 from 63, 19.0%; R Dickin, 3 from 22, 13.6%; A Turnell, 4 from 30, 13.3%. Jockeys: A P McCoy, 21 winners from 74 rides, 28.4%; R Dunwoody, 30 from 118, 25.4%; N Williamson, 4 from 18, 22.2%; C Llewellyn, 15 from 92, 16.3%; J Kavanagh, 4 from 27, 14.8%; R Johnson, 7 from 57, 12.3%.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Wolverhampton 2.10 Rennyholme 4.50 Julia's Relative

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Plumpton (first race, 2.10), Stratford (2.20), Taunton (2.00)
TUESDAY: Cheltenham (C4, 2.00), Fontwell Park (2.10), Sedgefield (2.20)
WEDNESDAY: Cheltenham (C4, 2.35), Huntingdon (1.50), Newton Abbot (2.10).
THURSDAY: Cheltenham (C4, 2.00), Hexham (2.25), Lingfield Park (AW, 2.45)
FRIDAY: Fakenham (2.10), Folkestone (2.00), Southwell (AW, 2.20)
SATURDAY: Hereford (2.20), Lingfield Park (2.10), Newcastle (2.15), Uttoxeter (C4, 12.45), Wolverhampton (AW, 7.00).

Flat meetings in bold

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Northern Bluff pick of marathon card

Point-to-point by Carl Evans

RACEGOERS in Wales have had a raw deal from the fixture list with **Brecon & Talybont** only the second meeting *to be held there so far* this season.

Not surprisingly, there was a huge entry for today's meeting and a 12-race card is the result, a stamina test for the hardiest enthusiast. Northern Bluff, one of the brightest talents in the sport, can take the men's open under Jamie Jukes.

If there has been too little racing to date in Wales, East Anglia has held racing on a weekly basis since the season started. The *downside* of that is overkill and today's **North Norfolk Harriers** fixture is short of a star or two.

Andrew Sansome faces a test of character, and some leg-pulling, at the meeting, having been fined £150 for "violent and improper *conduct*" at Leicester on Wednesday. It could hardly be a case of "whip *misuse*" although he was found guilty of damaging an ambulance mirror with his stick.

"I simply put my hand up to stop the ambulance to get a lift back," Sansome said, having fallen in the country. "The driver speeded up and caught my hand."

The rider's protests of innocence were ignored by the stewards who deemed he had committed a cardinal sin. *Cardinal Red,* who Sansome rides today, would be an appropriate winner of the men's open and the pair deserves some luck after being badly hampered on their latest start when pulling up.

Noel Wilson and Alastair *Crow* are in good heart after riding four winners each last weekend. Wilson holds a winning chance on the talented five-year-old Castletown Count for Mick Easterby at the **Derwent**, while Crow is certain to have a busy weekend, *riding at the* **Tanatside** today and **Blankney** tomorrow. Killatty Player and Aralier Man are among his fancied mounts.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: Avon Vale at Barbury Castle, 4m north of Marlborough (first *race* 1.00); Brecon & Talybont, Llanfrynach, 3m S of *Brecon* (12.00). Cumberland Farmers, Dalston, 4m S of Carlisle (12.30); Derwent, Charm Park, 6m S of Scarborough (12.00); North Ledbury, Upton-on-Severn (12.30); North Norfolk, Higham, 8m NE of Colchester (12.30); Oakley, Newton Bromswold, 3m SE of Rushden (1.00); South Cornwall, Gt Trethew, 3m SE of Liskeard (12.00); South East Hunts Club, Charing, 12m E of Maidstone (1.00); Tanatside, Eyton-on-Severn, 7m SE of Shrewsbury (12.00).

TOMORROW: Blankney at Southwell, inside of NH course (12.30); Staff College & RMA, Tweseldown, 3m W of Aldershot (12.30).

CHEPSTOW

THUNDERER

1.15 Potentate
1.45 Belmont King
2.15 Gods Squad
2.45 Scoresheel
3.20 Seattle Alley
3.50 Donjuan Collonges

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES)   SIS

1.15 THE RACING POST FOR CHELTENHAM HANDICAP HURDLE
BBC1

(£5,638: 2m 4f 110yd) (8 runners)

1	011-130	POTENTATE 16 (C,F,S) (J Weeden) M Pipe [illegible]	A P McCoy	91
2	11-2623	KINGDOM OF SHADES 15 (BF,S) (R Ogden) A Turnell [illegible]	P Carberry	97
3	131625	LAKE KARIBA 8 (C,G,S) [illegible] P Nicholls [illegible]	R Johnson	90
4	14-2412	MARIUS 19 (S) (Mrs A Andrews) J Gifford [illegible]	P Hide	96
5	431-0	PURPLE SPLASH 15 (V,D,G) (Sir Christopher Wates) P Makin [illegible]	J R Kavanagh	87
6	5-22000	CALL MY GUEST 28 (D,G,S) (D Clee) R Peacock 7-10-10	N Williamson	[illegible]
7	4210-03	SELATAN 15 (S) (Starlight Racing) D Gandolfo 5-10-9	R Dunwoody	89
8	1P-3030	INTERMAGIC 7 (G,S) (The Will To Win Partnership) [illegible]	S Fox	98

BETTING: 11-4 Kingdom Of Shades, 3-1 Selatan, 9-2 Potentate, 5-1 Marius, [illegible] Lake Kariba, [illegible] Intermagic, 10-1 others.

1996: MARINER'S AIR 9-11-12 A P McCoy [illegible]

FORM FOCUS

POTENTATE best effort beat Phar From Funny 6l in 6-runner handicap hurdle here (2m 110yd, good to soft). KINGDOM OF SHADES 1l 2nd of 7 to Copper Boy in handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 5f, good) on penultimate start. LAKE KARIBA 25¾l 5th of 11 to Lord McMurrough in handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 5f, good to soft). MARIUS beat [illegible] in 6-runner handicap hurdle at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, good to soft). PURPLE SPLASH beat [illegible] in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m 4f 110yd, good) penultimate start. SELATAN 9¾l 3rd of 13 to [illegible] in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m 4f, good).
Selection: POTENTATE

1.45 TOTE TEN TO FOLLOW HANDICAP CHASE
BBC1

(£8,432: 3m 2f 110yd) (7 runners)

1	U01-241	BISHOPS HALL 164 (D,F,G,S) [illegible]	N Williamson	95
2	21F5/1P	BELMONT KING 34 (C,S) [illegible]	A P McCoy	[illegible]
3	2252/10-	BUCKBOARD BOUNCE 483 (F,G,S) [illegible]	P Carberry	86
4	211F2-1	GENERAL WOLFE 15 (G,S) [illegible]	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
5	411-411	GIVENTIME 21 (CD,G,S) [illegible]	L Harvey	[illegible]
6	453383	SPUFFINGTON 21 (C,G,S) [illegible]	P Hide	91
7	00-43F0	SEE ENOUGH 21 (S) (J Meaden) [illegible]	S McNeill	[illegible]

Long handicap: Spuffington 9-11, See Enough 9-10

BETTING: 7-4 General Wolfe, 3-1 Giventime, [illegible] Belmont King, [illegible] Buckboard Bounce, [illegible] Bishops Hall, [illegible] Spuffington, See Enough

1996: MAJOR BELL 8-11-4 [illegible]

FORM FOCUS

BISHOPS HALL beat Anabatic 1¾l in the 11-runner grade B Kerry National Handicap Chase at Listowel (3m, good). *BELMONT KING beat* Trying Again 1¾l in the 7-runner grade II Rehearsal Chase here (3m, good to soft) on penultimate start. BUCKBOARD BOUNCE beat Mutbank 5l in 6-runner handicap chase at Newbury (2m 4f, good to firm) on penultimate start. GENERAL WOLFE beat [illegible] in 7-runner handicap chase at Haydock (3m, good to soft). GIVENTIME beat [illegible] in 16-runner handicap chase over course and distance (soft) with SPUFFINGTON [illegible]. SEE ENOUGH [illegible].
Selection: GIVENTIME

2.15 PETER O'SULLEVAN NOVICES HURDLE
BBC1

(5-Y-O £13,875: 2m 110yd) (9 runners)

1	44	ABSOLUTE LIMIT 23 (B Woolton) J Gifford 11-5	P Hide	82
2	04211	BREAK THE RULES 15 (D,G) (A Lomas) M Pipe 11-5	A P McCoy	97
3	201-0	BURN OUT 40 (G) (The Al Yancy Partnership) J Pearce 11-5	P Carberry	—
4	0110-21	GODS SQUAD 9 (D,G,S) (R Kirkland) J Mackie 11-5	N Williamson	93
5	26-313	NO PATTERN 14 (G) (K Higson) G L Moore 11-5	D Gallagher	[illegible]
6	410	PERCY BRAITHWAITE 31 (D,F) (Glass Pig Racing Synd) Miss P Whittle 11-5	C Llewellyn	89
7	2	ROYAL SCIMITAR 15 (Highway Business Systems Ltd) Mrs A Perrett 11-5	R Dunwoody	90
8	11	WHAT'S THE VERDICT 30 (D,G) (S O'Farrell) A O'Brien (Ire) 11-5	C F Swan	98
9	21121	MOTOQUA 39 (F) (Mrs C Smith) D Nicholson 11-0	R Johnson	89

BETTING: [illegible] What's The Verdict, 5-1 Motoqua, Gods Squad, 6-1 Break The Rules, 8-1 No Pattern, 10-1 Royal Scimitar, 14-1 Absolute Limit, 16-1 others.

1996: DIVERTIMIENTO 5-11-5 E Husband (5-1) J Mackie 11 ran

FORM FOCUS

BREAK THE RULES beat ROYAL SCIMITAR (5lb worse off) [illegible] in novice hurdle at Haydock (2m, good). GODS SQUAD beat Good Vibes 1¾l in 11-runner novice hurdle at Wetherby (2m, heavy). NO PATTERN beat Coeur Chief 1¾l in 11-runner maiden hurdle at Plumpton (2m 1f, good). PERCY BRAITHWAITE beat [illegible] 1¾l in 11-runner *maiden hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good to firm)* with BREAK THE RULES 7l 4th. WHAT'S THE VERDICT beat Tempo 7l in 20-runner maiden hurdle at Gowran Park (2m, good) on penultimate start. MOTOQUA beat Stormyfairweather 6l in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m 4f 110yd, good to firm).
Selection: BREAK THE RULES

2.45 LLANGIBBY NOVICES CHASE (£2,908: 2m 3f 110yd) (6 runners)

1	[illegible]-122	SCORESHEET 11 (BF,F,G) (Pell-mell Partners) J Gifford 7-11-9	P Hide	90
2	0P02-P4	DUNNICKS VIEW 23 (F Tucker) F Tucker 8-11-2	M Griffiths (7)	62
3	440-45P	FELLOO 36 (Mrs J Edwards Heathcote) T George 8-11-2	P Carberry	74
4	61F0-20	MYSTIC ISLE 29 (S) (Mrs J Newton) N Gaselee 7-11-2	C Llewellyn	66
5	P-UFP	SAUCY'S WOLF 78 (Mrs J Brooks) Mrs E Brooks 7-11-2	M Sharratt	—
6	U5525-1	WITH IMPUNITY 24 (G,S) (Guest Leasing Co Ltd) P Nicholls 8-11-2	R Johnson	[illegible]

BETTING: [illegible] Scoresheet, 11-4 With Impunity, 4-1 Mystic Isle, 10-1 Felloo, 14-1 Dunnicks View, 50-1 Saucy's Wolf

1996: PETE THE PARSON 7-11-9 J Osborne (5-2) J Old 8 ran

3.20 TOTE QUADPOT JUVENILE NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(4-Y-O £3,488: 2m 110yd) (5 runners)

1	111435	DOCTOR GREEN 36 (V,D,F,G) (J Weeden) M Pipe 12-0	J Evans	90
2	61	INFLUENCE PEDLER 21 (G) (Miss S Blumberg) J Old 11-13	C Llewellyn	96
3	104	SHU GAA 14 (D,BF,S) ([illegible]) O Sherwood 11-0	J A McCarthy	[illegible]
4	603	SEATTLE ALLEY 18F (L & P Partnership) P Webber 10-11	P Carberry	92
5	1-4646	COME ON IN 16 (Ascot Park Owners Group) R Dickin 10-0	Mr R Thornton (5)	98

Long handicap: Come On In 9-2

BETTING: 10-11 Influence Pedler, 3-1 Shu Gaa, 4-1 Doctor Green, 8-1 Seattle Alley, 25-1 Come On In.

1996: SHEPHERDS REST 10-12 A Thornton (10-1) S Mellor 8 ran

3.50 COTSWOLD VALE CHASE (Handicap £3,488: 2m 3f 110yd) (7 runners)

1	F-50221	KINGS CHERRY 8 (CD,S) (T Swaffield) J Old 9-11-10	C Llewellyn	97
2	U65/101	INDIAN ARROW 8 (F,S) (J & J Richards) M Pipe 9-11-6	C Maude	95
3	115-FP4	JACOB'S WIFE 18 (F,G) (The Black Sheep Flock) P Webber 7-11-4	R Bellamy	89
4	0F052R-	DONJUAN COLLONGES 355 (S) (R Ogden) T Forster 6-11-4	P Carberry	88
5	134P0P	BENJAMIN LANCASTER 23 (C,G,S) (M Griffin) M Griffin 13-10-10	M Griffiths (7)	95
6	3F224-	PERSIAN SWORD 761 (S) (Ford Farm Racing) D Nicholson 11-10-7	R Massey (3)	—
7	[illegible]34252	COURT MASTER 8 (BF) (Vice Admiral Sir Fitzroy Talbot) R Buckler 9-10-5	B Powell	[illegible]

BETTING: 9-4 Indian Arrow, [illegible] Persian Sword, 7-2 Kings Cherry, 6-1 Court Master, 8-1 Donjuan Collonges, 10-1 Jacob's Wife, [illegible] Benjamin Lancaster

1996: BELLS LIFE 7-10-7 G Tormey (5-2) P Hobbs 7 ran

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ATHLETICS

Kipketer breaks world record in men's 800m heat

FROM DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT, IN PARIS

WILSON KIPKETER, a Kenyan-born Dane, wasted no time yesterday in becoming the first athlete to profit from the introduction of bonus payments for world records at world championships. He stepped on to the track for a first-round heat at the world indoor championships in the Palais Omnisports here and knocked off a world record in the 800 metres.

For his solo run, Kipketer earned $50,000 (about £31,000) with the promise of $50,000 more if he wins the title. Never before in a world championships, indoor or out, has a track athlete set a world record in an individual event in a heat.

Kipketer sliced almost a second off the world record of 1min 44.84sec, held by Paul Ereng, since 1989. Kipketer recorded 1min 43.96sec, a double blow to Kenya. It might not have been so bad had Ereng, a Kenyan, lost his record to a compatriot, but Kipketer was running for Denmark.

The switch of nationality cost Kipketer a place in the Atlanta Olympic Games last summer. The Danish authorities insisted on him waiting seven years before granting him citizenship. He had lived in Denmark for six years but there was no passport of convenience and he was denied the gold medal that would surely have been his.

In the first international championships since then, Kipketer made an impact on the opening day, but said he had not gone to the start-line planning a world record. "My group [heat] was not strong and I had no pressure, so I took a chance. It is good to eliminate problems. I take one problem at a time. I have only one thing to think about now — the gold medal, not to break the world record again. If you think about two things, you cannot get two right."

When Jamie Baulch came out for the first round of the 400 metres, the announcer read out his name and lane then, mistakenly, repeated it. "I was laughing," Baulch said. "I thought, 'What's going on?', there are five other people in the race."

Baulch, the overwhelming favourite to win the final tomorrow, qualified, without looking troubled, for the semi-finals today, putting behind him the harrowing experience he suffered on this track three years ago. Having qualified for the European championships final, he crashed to the floor in a tangle of legs approaching the bell, failing to finish.

Admitting that he carried the memory of that moment with him on to the track, Baulch said: "I was thinking to myself, 'Here we go again, it is this track'." He need not have worried. He won his heat in 46.52sec, although he was not first to the bell, as has been customary this season.

Over the next two days he will be left concerned at being first into the second lap because the finish-line, unlike most indoor tracks on which he has run, is at the end of the straight rather than close to the middle. "On this track, coming into the last bend, you can be third or fourth and still do a lot of damage."

The Baulch family arrives en masse today from Wales to lend support: mother, father, two aunts, two uncles, girlfriend and baby son. Baulch had said on Thursday that he saw the Americans as the threat and nothing occurred yesterday to change that view. Derek Mills and Deon Minor look the danger men.

Mark Hylton, Britain's second representative, won his heat but was fortunate that he was not eliminated. On the final bend, Hylton was blocked in and would have had no escape had Kevin Widmer, from Switzerland, not strayed from the inside, leaving a gap. Hylton ran into it, and into first place, recording 47.58sec.

Baulch and Ashia Hansen were the only two British medal contenders competing yesterday and Hansen cruised through, qualifying as easily as Baulch had. Hansen managed 14.24 metres in the triple jump and now faces, in the final, four of the top seven from the Atlanta Olympics.

Given Britain's revered status as a sprinting nation, it was embarrassing that neither of the two men's 60-metres runners reached the final. Jason Livingston, in his first championship since returning from a drugs ban, was eliminated in the first round and Jason Gardener went out in the semi-finals. The same applied in the women's 60 metres, no British athlete reaching last night's final.

Sally Gunnell, still making her way back slowly from a series of injuries, went out in the first round of the 400 metres but Phylis Smith progressed into the semi-finals as a fastest loser.

MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT

Gunnell finishes third in her first-round heat of the 400 metres and is eliminated

RESULTS FROM PARIS

MEN: 60m: Final: 1, C Papadias (Gr) 6.50sec; 2, M Green (Jam) 6.51; 3, D Ezinwa (Nigeria) 6.52; 4, R Stewart (Jam) 6.55; 5, B Surin (Can) 6.57; 6, P Lovgren (Swe) 6.61. Did not qualify: J Gardener (GB), fourth in second semi-final; J Livingston (GB), third in heat one. 3,000m: Heat one: 1, G Di Napoli (It) 7min 52.72sec; 2, M Kiptanui (Ken) 7:52.98; 3, F Bayisa (Eth) 7:53.24; 4, E Lahssini (Mor) 7:53.53; 8, I Grime (GB) 7:58.30; 11, M Carroll (Ire) 8:05.349. Heat two: 1, H Gebrselassie (Eth) 7:50.14; 2, I Sghir (Mor) 7:50.42; 3, P Bitok (Ken) 7:51.53; 4, J Mayock (GB) 7:51.60. Shot: Group one: 1, J Godina (US) 20.46m; 2, M Halvari (Fin) 20.04; 3, M Martinez (Sp) 19.96; 4, K Hauge (Nor) 19.78; 5, Y Bilonoh (Ukr) 19.62; 6, C Fantini (It) 19.59. Did not qualify: 9, M Proctor (GB) 19.21. Group two: 1, O Burder (Ger) 20.06; 2, A Harju (Fin) 20.04; 3, M Menc (Cz) 20.01; 4, A Bagach (Ukr) 19.91; 5, P Dal Soglio (It) 19.82; 6, M Parlin (US) 19.81. Did not qualify: 9, M Simson (GB) 18.30. Pole vault: Group one: 1, R Botha (SA) 5.70m; 2, T Lobinger (Ger) 5.70; 3, I Potapovitch (Kaz) 5.65; 4, T Barthel (Nor) 5.65; 5, V Strogalez (Russ) 5.55; 6, M Ulvsback (Swe) 5.55; 7, M Voss (Den) 5.55. Group two: 1, O Brits (SA) 5.65; 2, M Tarasov (Russ) 5.65; 3, A Andrii (Fr) 5.65; 4, W Deering (US), L Johnson (US) and J Garcia (Sp) 5.55. Long jump: Group one: 1, K Sosunov (Russ) 8.30m; 2, R Ducros (Fr) 7.98; 3, E Walder (US) 7.92. Group two: 1, J Green (US) 8.17; 2, Y Tretyak (Russ) 8.13; 3, I Pedroso (Cuba) 8.12; 4, G Cankar (Slovenia) 8.04; 5, B Tudor (Rom) 7.95; 6, A Glavatski (Bela) 7.95; 7, J Beckford (Jam) 7.95; 8, S Vasdekis (Gr) 7.92; 9, C Calado (Por) 7.85.

WOMEN: 60m: Final: 1, G Devers (US) 7.06sec; 2, C Sturrup (Bah) 7.15; 3, F Bangue (Fr) 7.17; 4, C Ajunwa (Nigeria) 7.19; 5, E Opokolu (Nigeria) 7.38; 6, I Privalova (Russ) 7.88. Did not qualify: M Richardson (GB), fourth in first semi-final; B Kinch (GB), sixth in third semi-final. Triple jump: Group one: 1, A Hansen (GB) 14.24m; 2, C Nicolau (Rom) 14.23; 3, I Lasovskaya (Russ) 14.06; 4, T Marinova (Bul) 13.90; 5, Y Aldama (Cuba) 13.82; 9, N Dennis (GB) 13.46. Group two: 1, R Mateescu (Rom) 14.60; 2, S Kasparkova (Cz) 14.37; 3, P Lobinger (Ger) 14.28; 4, Ren Ruiping (China) 13.98; 5, N Kayukova (Russ) 13.86; 6, O Hovorova (Ukr) 13.80; 7, B Lise (Fr) 13.79. High jump: Group one: 1, I Babakova (Ukr) 1.96m; 2, A Astafei (Ger) 1.93; 3, Y Lyakhova (Mol) 1.93; 4, O Bolshova (Mol) 1.93; 5, K Bergqvist (Swe) 1.93; 6, M Iagar (Rom) 1.90; 7, Z Kovacikova (Cz) 1.90; 8, Zhang Liwen (China) 1.85; 9, S Cadusch (Switz) 1.85; 10, S Zalevskaya (Kaz) 1.85; 11, M Dunkley (GB), K Jenkins (US) and S Wirteveen (Arg) 1.80. Pentathlon: 60m hurdles: Heat one: 1, R Nazarovienė (Lith) 8.20sec; 2, M Steigauf (Ger) 8.23; 3, E Barber (Sierra Leone) 8.39. Heat two: 1, S Braun (Ger) 8.11; 2, K Carter (US) 8.36; 3, T Hautala (Fin) 8.47. High jump: 1, T Gordeyeva (Russ) 1.92m; 2, Braun 1.86; 3, Steigauf 1.83. Shot: 1, Carter 15.48m; 2, Braun 14.39; 3, U Wlodarczyk (Pol) 14.23. Long jump: 1, Steigauf 6.47m; 2, Braun 6.40; 3, Barber 6.35; 4, Wlodarczyk 6.17; 5, Gordeyeva 6.10.

SPORT IN BRIEF

World Cup crown passes to Wiberg

PERNILLA WIBERG, of Sweden, secured the women's World Cup overall skiing title yesterday by finishing third in a super giant-slalom at Mammoth Mountain, California, the race being won by her closest challenger, Katja Seizinger, of Germany. Wiberg's third place was worth 60 points and increased her season's total to 1,615 — 11 more than Seizinger, the 1996 overall winner, could accumulate even if she did manage to win all of the five races remaining on this season's schedule.

Wiberg failed, however, to wrap up the season's super-G title. Hilde Gerg, of Germany, ensured that battle would continue in the World Cup finals in Vail, Colorado, next week by taking second place yesterday. Gerg's time of 1min 17.67sec beat Wiberg's by a twentieth of a second and reduced the Swede's lead in the super-G standings to 39 points.

European charge

GOLF: Colin Montgomerie made a significant move towards his first professional victory on US soil with an impressive performance in the rain-delayed second round of the Doral Open in Miami yesterday. After kicking his heels in the locker-room for an hour, Montgomerie battled through a brisk breeze to reach five under par, within two strokes of the lead. Nick Faldo birdied the first two holes to get to four under while Jesper Parnevik moved into contention with a burst of five birdies in seven holes.

Whitcombe's target

ATHLETICS: Andrea Whitcombe, the Great Britain international, is taking a break from training for the world cross country championships in Turin later this month to challenge for her third English title at Havant, Hampshire, today. Whitcombe, 25, who previously won the championship in 1990 and 1991, is hoping to take over from the absent Alison Wyeth, who is expecting a baby. There will also be a new men's champion, as last year's winner, John Nuttall, of Preston, is injured.

Ireland outclassed

HOCKEY: Ireland suffered a humiliating 9-1 defeat against Argentina in the men's World Cup qualifying tournament in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. They kept a clean sheet for the first quarter but lost their composure in a 16-minute spell in the second half during which their opponents rattled in six goals against one in reply from Nick Cooke, who scored from a penalty corner.

House party

ROWING: Christ Church ended their downward spiral by rowing over on the third day of the Oxford University Torpids on the Isis yesterday. They held off Worcester in the men's first division, which produced only one bump — by Exeter, who caught St Edmund Hall approaching the Gut. Christ Church were, however, bumped out of the women's top division when they were caught by Lincoln.

BOWLS

Shaw excels to take seventh title

NORMA SHAW, of Thornaby, won the national indoor singles title for the seventh time — but the first since 1988 — when she defeated Jayne Roylance, of North Walsham, 21-9 in a disappointingly one-sided final at York yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes).

It was a timely win for Shaw, a former world outdoor champion, who was disappointed recently to learn that she had been omitted from the national outdoor side for the Atlantic Rim championships in Llandrindod Wells in August.

"Today's success meant as much to me as the first six," Shaw, 59, said. "I'm still enjoying my bowls as much as I ever did — if I stopped enjoying it, I'd give it up."

After beating Linda Rose, of Copeland, 21-14, Delia Searle, of Tilbury, 21-13, and Carol Ashby, of Eastbourne, 21-8, on the way to the final, Shaw found her touch from the start yesterday and, perhaps with that outdoor setback in mind, was at her most determined in the final, never allowing an out-of-touch Roylance to settle to line or length.

Both finalists won the right to compete in the women's world indoor championships at Llanelli from April 18 to 20, against players from New Zealand, Hong Kong and Canada, as well as the other three home countries and the Channel Islands.

RESULTS: Singles: First round: D Searle (Tilbury) bt S Rickman (King George Field) 21-13; N Shaw (Thornaby) bt L Rose (Copeland) 21-14; C Ashby (Eastbourne) bt J Searle (Dorchester) 21-14; K Strutt (Egham) bt E Logan (Mansfield, North London) 21-9; J Redfern (Rushden) bt J Baker (South Forest) 21-19; E Bessell (Yeovil) bt Y Webb (Deangate Ridge) 21-18; K Hawes (Cherwell) bt A Green (Isca, Exeter) 21-11; J Roylance (North Walsham) bt A McPherson (Avon Valley) 21-8. Quarter-finals: Shaw bt Searle 21-13; Ashby bt Strutt 21-19; Bessell bt Redfern 21-7; Roylance bt Hawes 21-14. Semi-finals: Shaw bt Ashby 21-8; Roylance bt Bessell 21-8. Final: Shaw by Roylance, 21-9

CRICKET

Pigott's plan makes progress

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

TONY PIGOTT, the former Sussex bowler leading a campaign to oust the county's beleaguered committee, yesterday welcomed the resignation of Alan Caffyn, the chairman, as "a step in the right direction".

Ken Hopkins, 63, a long-serving member of the committee, has been appointed as replacement for Caffyn, whose seven-year reign was finally undermined by the criticism he attracted for blaming the departure of a number of leading players this winter on Alan Wells, the county's former captain, who was dismissed in October.

Pigott has gathered enough support to force a special general meeting on April 8, when a vote will be taken on a motion of no confidence in the committee. "I can confirm I would like to become chairman," Pigott said. "The future of Sussex is at stake and new blood and new ideas are urgently needed.

"I welcome Mr Caffyn's resignation, but what faces the members now is more of the same or a chance to take the club forward. I feel the whole committee's position is now untenable. There is no way back for them and by appointing Ken Hopkins as chairman they have played into my hands.

"I feel being a committee member for someone's own benefit is not enough. The Sussex committee has not been successful and I am giving members the opportunity to make a positive statement."

Yorkshire's 10,000 members will be balloted at the club's annual meeting in Leeds today on the controversial proposal to move from Headingley to a purpose-built £45 million stadium at Durkar, near Wakefield.

The plan earned the backing yesterday of Dickie Bird, the celebrated umpire who played for Yorkshire in the 1950s. "Headingley is the home of legends and steeped in history and tradition, and I have some very happy memories of Headingley as a player and as a Test umpire: but if the new ground comes off, it is in an ideal position," he said.

Brendon Julian, the Australia all-rounder, was yesterday confirmed as Surrey's overseas player for the second successive year.

Young's Test best spurs New Zealand

BRYAN YOUNG scored an unbeaten 154, his best in Test cricket, to put New Zealand in a strong position after the first day of the first Test match against Sri Lanka in Dunedin yesterday.

Young, the opening batsman, exacted a heavy toll on a disappointing Sri Lanka attack to register his second Test century as New Zealand reached 343 for four.

On a pitch tailor-made for batsmen, Young, Matt Horne — who made a fluent 66 — and Stephen Fleming, the captain, who scored an elegant 51, made Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka captain, regret his decision to field. His bowlers, clearly short of match practice, struggled to maintain a consistent line on a pitch demanding accuracy.

Young made his century in 272 minutes off 203 balls, hitting 16 boundaries, and added 140 with Horne for the second wicket in 146 minutes.

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings

B A Young not out	154
B A Pocock c Mahanama b Vaas	18
M J Horne c Mahanama b Ranatunga	66
*S P Fleming c Zoysa b Wickremasinghe	51
N J Astle b Vaas	27
C L Vettori not out	1
Extras (lb 9, nb 17)	26
Total (4 wkts)	343

C L Cairns, †A C Parore, D N Patel, H T Davis and S B Doull to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-55, 2-195, 3-271, 4-337

BOWLING: Vaas 21-5-81-2; Zoysa 23-4-62-0; Wickremasinghe 15-3-71-1; Muralitharan 23-6-86-0; Ranatunga 5-0-29-1; Jayasuriya 3-0-5-0

SRI LANKA: *A Ranatunga, R S Mahanama, S T Jayasuriya, M S Atapattu, P A de Silva, H P Tillekeratne, †R S Kaluwitharana, M Muralitharan, W P U J C Vaas, G P Wickremasinghe, N Zoysa.

Umpires: C E King (New Zealand) and †T Robinson (Zimbabwe)

West Indies slowed by Indian resistance

INDIA yesterday mounted spirited resistance to West Indies' inexorable march towards an intimidating first-innings total in the first Test, but the three wickets they gained in the morning session of the second day barely compensated for the damage done to their cause by Carl Hooper.

The often enigmatic all-rounder progressed from his overnight score of 87 to complete his seventh Test century before spooning a catch to Venkatesh Prasad off the bowling of Abey Kuruvilla. His 129, which came off 212 balls, contained his 3,000 run in Test cricket and will have brought him happy memories of his international debut, ten years ago in Calcutta, which he celebrated with a hundred.

Anil Kumble, the leg-spinner, earned a leg-before decision against Junior Murray with the last ball of the session to leave the home side on 370 for seven. Roland Holder, making his first Test appearance, was unbeaten on three.

Hooper and Ian Bishop, whose 24 in nearly two hours justified his position of nightwatchman, put on 65 for the fifth wicket as West Indies scored at a reasonable rate on the slow pitch at Sabina Park, Kingston, Jamaica.

Hooper reached his hundred in the first hour by glancing Kumble, but the bowler was rewarded for his relentless toil when Bishop skied a drive to Sunil Joshi, who held a fine catch while running backwards.

Kuruvilla, the 6ft 5in fast-medium bowler who has impressed on his debut with his movement, subtle change of pace and control, kept probing away before he was able to add Hooper's scalp to that of Lara's, which he picked up late on the first day.

He might have had Holder in the penultimate over before the interval, but Mohammed Azharuddin failed to hold onto a catching chance and a confident appeal for leg-before was turned down by the umpire, Steve Bucknor.

Mark Taylor, the Australia captain, was forced to withdraw from the tour party's match against Border at the last moment yesterday with a back injury. Jason Gillespie took seven for 34 to bowl out Border for 117 and the Australians then reached 206 for five.

WEST INDIES: First Innings

S L Campbell c Mongia b Joshi	40
S C Williams b Kuruvilla	23
S Chanderpaul b Mongia	52
B C Lara c Mongia b Kuruvilla	83
C L Hooper c Prasad b Kuruvilla	129
I R Bishop c Joshi b Kumble	24
R I C Holder not out	3
†J R Murray lbw b Kumble	1
Extras (lb 7, nb 8)	15
Total (7 wkts)	370

C E L Ambrose, F A Rose and *C A Walsh to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-41, 2-86, 3-143, 4-290, 5-357, 6-368, 7-370

BOWLING: Prasad 28-5-104-1; Kuruvilla 27-8-64-3; Kumble 33-3-96-2; Joshi 20-5-68-1; Ganguly 7-1-17-0; Laxman 3-0-14-0

INDIA: V V S Laxman, N S Sidhu, R S Dravid, *S R Tendulkar, M A Azharuddin, S C Ganguly, †N R Mongia, A R Kumble, S Joshi, A Kuruvilla, B K V Prasad

Umpires: S A Bucknor (West Indies) and A M J Kitchen (England)

HOCKEY

Teddington must pass stern test of character

THE focal point of interest in the National League tomorrow is the premier division match between Cannock, the home side, and Teddington, who must win to keep their hopes alive for the final showdown on April 6 (Sydney Friskin writes). With the England team away in Pakistan, premier division matches will be suspended until that date except for a rearranged game between Old Loughtonians and Surbiton tomorrow week.

Teddington welcome back their two talented youngsters, Hayden and Wiles, who were training with the England junior squads last week.

Reading, who entertain Guildford, will build their game on the stability of Wyatt in deep defence, the midfield scheming of Hoskin and the sharpness of Pearn and Ashdown in attack.

Havant, already relegated despite a 5-3 victory over Hounslow, are hosts to Barford Tigers, who are battling to avoid a similar fate.

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RUGBY UNION: BATH AND LEICESTER REST KEY PLAYERS

Title-chasers keep talent in reserve

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

SOME distinguished and expensive posteriors will be warming replacement benches when the Courage Clubs Championship resumes this weekend. Federico Méndez, the Argentina hooker, will watch his colleagues at Bath do battle with London Irish today. *Martin Johnson*, of England, does likewise for Leicester against West Hartlepool, while Saracens keep two World Cup-winners, *Michael Lynagh* and Tony Daly, on the sidelines against Bristol at Enfield tomorrow.

It is no reflection on the individuals themselves, rather recognition of the workload placed on them already and, more significant, what is to come. Saracens, for example, expect to play nine games between March 30 and May 3 while Newcastle, in the second division, are preparing for 11 games in eight weeks as they make up their backlog of league fixtures.

The English game's winners and losers will have completed a desperate slog by the end of the season, complicated by yet more postponements this month, caused by the World Cup sevens in Hong Kong. London Irish, with three players away and relegation from the first division looming, will be loath to play their game with Saracens on March 22, though that gives Paddy Johns the chance to recover from concussion suffered while playing in the Saracens second row last Tuesday.

The Irish, second from bottom, take on a Bath side that *must* win the championship to sustain a nine-year record of success in either league or cup. They do so with Niall Hogan, the former Ireland scrum half and captain, making his debut against a side whose coaches include Clive Woodward, the former England centre, who worked with the Irish for three years.

"I'm expecting a very difficult game," Woodward said. "Lower sides in the table who are scrapping for points can make life tough." Even so, Bath have beaten the Irish in league and cup this season and, at the Recreation Ground, should complete the treble, though they will look forward to hearing of Simon Geoghegan's return. After a season of injury setbacks, the Ireland wing *plays in the second-team game* at Sunbury.

Wasps, the leaders, give their latest recruit, Kenny Logan, a debut at Loftus Road against Gloucester tomorrow in the knowledge that they have testing encounters to come away from home if they are to sustain their two-point lead over Leicester. Logan, who will win his thirtieth Scotland cap against France next weekend, has agreed a 27-month contract.

It was Gloucester who brought a five-match unbeaten run to an end when Wasps visited Kingsholm in *October and started their own* remarkable rise up the first division, in which they stand fifth. No one is more representative of their work *ethic than Peter Glanville, the flanker*, who plays his hundredth game tomorrow. "I hope the national selectors will soon start appreciating him the way we do," Richard Hill, *the* Gloucester director of rugby, said.

Wasps had hoped that Va'aiga Tuigamala would extend his pre-*Christmas run* with them but, refusing to be drawn into a price war, had to watch while Newcastle bought Tuigamala's contract from Wigan *Rugby League Club. The first fruit of* that sale will be seen today, when Tuigamala makes his debut against Wakefield alongside another returning union international, Alan Tait.

Llanelli take on Swansea, leaders of the Welsh League, without Ieuan Evans, whose place in the Wales team to play England next Saturday was made even more doubtful when a calf strain forced him out of national squad training on Thursday night.

IRELAND SEVENS SQUAD: R Wallace (Saracens), D Hickie (St Mary's College), N Woods (London Irish), J Bell (Northampton), N Malone (Leicester), D Humphreys (London Irish), D McBride (Malone, captain), E Miller (Leicester), K Dawson (London Irish), B Cronin (Garryowen).

Rank and file want to see strong leadership

By David Hands

IF THERE is one quality to emerge from tomorrow's special general meeting called by the Rugby Football Union (RFU) at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, the game at large would wish it to be strong leadership. Sadly, a possible outcome of the third such meeting within 14 months is stalemate, with neither the union nor its opponents receiving the necessary two-thirds majority for proposed constitutional changes.

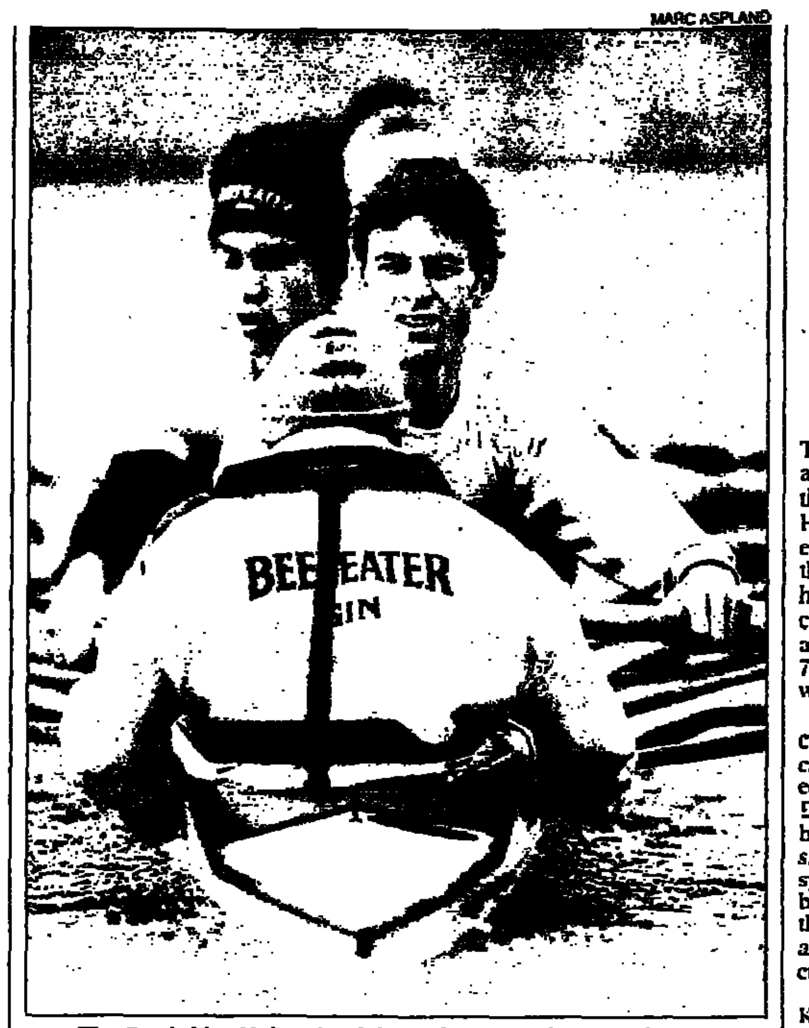
Quite rightly, the RFU is concerned to turn itself into as business-*like a structure as possible*; democracy, a principle to which individuals turn far too glibly, may have popular appeal but does not *necessarily make for day-to-day* efficiency. Equally correctly, the rank and file of the game expect to see the best individuals employed to make the revised structure work, but the debate has become bogged down in conflict between personalities, just as the long-running clash between the union and the leading clubs did.

The meeting tomorrow has to vote, not only on a series of technical constitutional changes, but on the appointment, powers and relationship of the new chief executive — formerly the RFU secretary, the post held by Tony Hallett — and the chairman of the new 12-man management board that will succeed the present executive committee, chaired by Cliff Brittle. Whether both can *survive in a healthy working relationship* in future seems open to question.

The RFU recommends the chair*man should be appointed by its own* council (the general committee); amendments insist that the full membership should vote annually. *Furthermore, a strong body of* opinion believes that the post of chief executive should be advertised, *which suggests a lack of confidence in Hallett.*

"All the characters involved in the present debate have a finite shelf-life," David Hiles, secretary of *Pinner and Grammarians, said. "I hope we are setting up principles for* the future."

☐ Representatives of Heineken, which has sponsored the European club competition for the past two years, meet European Rugby Cup Ltd (ERC) in Dublin on Wednesday to *discuss* the terms of ERC's television agreement with BSkyB which was confirmed yesterday. They will hope that the five-year deal, said to be worth more than £30 million, incorporates a terrestrial element, otherwise they may have to *review their* involvement with the competition.


MARC ASPLAND

The Cambridge University eight on dawn patrol on the River Cam at Ely yesterday as they step up their preparations for the University Boat Race on March 29. Cambridge have won for the past four years

GOLF

James striving for place in Ryder Cup picture

MARK JAMES, a Ryder Cup regular for much of the past 20 years, *spent £50 on a short Ping putter in* Dubai last week and hopes it will help him to get back in contention for a place in the Europe team to meet the *United* States in the autumn.

He is 86th in the Ryder Cup table, with only 15,832 points, but his five-under-par 67 in the second round of the Moroccan Open in Agadir yesterday left him only one shot behind the leader, David A Russell. *James, 43, has lost* none of his competitive edge and, though last year was disappointing, he said: "I made my first cut of the season in Dubai last week and my whole game is much better than last year when, frankly, it was bad in all departments."

Yesterday, having switched from his long-handled putter to his new short one, he holed a huge putt for an eagle three at the 10th hole and another from more than 20ft for a birdie two at the short 14th. He came home in 31, five under par, and *acknowledges that the first prize of* £58,330 this week would be handy in his bid for an eighth Ryder Cup appearance.

James has more than ordinary hope. He won the Moroccan Open on these Royal Golf Links two years ago and is looking for history to repeat itself. But he will have strong opposition. Russell leads on 137, with José Coceres, of Argentina, and the Britons, Phillip *Price*, Jon Robson and Brian Davis *level* with James on 138.

In 20 years of trying, Russell has never won on the European Tour. He would have been further ahead but for dropping two strokes at the 18th.

☐ Lee Westwood had a level-par 72 in the second round of the Malaysian Open in Kuala Lumpur yesterday to retain a share of the lead with Larry Barber, of the United States. The pair are eight under par.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Cougars ready to pounce on cup holders

By Christopher Irvine

THE new mood of expectancy at Keighley extends beyond the visit tomorrow of St Helens for a Silk Cut Challenge Cup quarter-final, now that the cloud of insolvency hanging over the first division club appears to be lifting. It is a sign of the times that all 7,845 tickets for the match were quickly snapped up.

At a meeting this week, creditors were assured by the *club's administrator, appointed* last October, that a £1 million debt was close to being wiped out. In the York*shire town itself, recent* despair has given way to buoyancy, as the Cougars put their problems behind them *and prepare for the visit of the* cup holders.

Kevan Halliday-Brown, the Keighley chief executive, said yesterday: "*There was deep* pessimism in the town, especially with the *moves* by a couple of leading players, Nick *Pinkney and Martin* Wood, to Sheffield. The financial position was a worry for many people, but we are *virtually over that and a great* cup run and the St Helens match has put a spring back in the step of everyone."

Ironically, some of Keighley's problems can be traced back to the club record fee of £134,000 paid two years ago to *Sheffield for Daryl Powell*, now their player-coach. Three days later, Keighley found there was no place for them in the new *Super League. Several* sponsors withdrew and club officials reckoned the exclusion cost them in the region of £750,000.

Powell, the former Great Britain stand-off half, stuck by the club and Keighley with him. He was handed the coaching role in succession to Phil Larder, now at Sheffield, whose contract was not renewed after last season. Powell and Simon Irving, the team manager, will both be on duty on the pitch tomorrow. Off the field, the pair have worked well, with a tight budget, in blending a combative, pacey unit that is unbeaten this season.

The one change to the Keighley side, which upset Halifax in the previous round, is the return on the wing of Jason Critchley, their leading try-scorer last season, who was forced home early from Great Britain's tour of New Zealand last October with a knee *injury*. Steve Prescott, *the* St Helens full back, has recovered from food poisoning, but the holders have a doubt *about Derek McVey*, who faces a late fitness check.

Salford won a tight pre-season contest at Warrington, *but that is not a reliable guide* to the televised all Super League tie at Wilderspool today. David and Paul *Hulme, brothers-in-arms for* most of their careers at Widnes, are in opposition for only the second time. If it is a *case of age before beauty*, David, 33, might emerge victorious from Salford's veteran pack.

Steve Blakeley plays his first match since last September at stand-off for Salford after a second groin operation in 15 *months*. Iestyn Harris, *the* Wales and Britain back, made his first appearance for Warrington since being placed on *the transfer list at £1.35 million* last July in the fifth-round defeat of Sheffield, and will be on the bench again.

*Leeds, with Richie Black*more, the New Zealand centre, fit for a first outing, appear to have the most straightforward *passage into the semi-finals*, playing first division opposition at home tomorrow. Featherstone Rovers were anything but promotion candidates in losing last weekend to Hull Kingston Rovers, but with half their side composed of former players at Headingley, incentive is hardly in short supply.

Oldham are expecting a 13,000 crowd at Boundary Park tomorrow, but have the look of sacrificial lambs about them against Bradford Bulls, the finalists last year. Their cause will not be helped by the absence of Matt Munro, the influential Australian forward, who has a broken hand.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket match*
Pools coupon numbers in brackets

FA Cup
Sixth round
(-) Derby v Middlesbrough

FA Carling Premiership
(1) Arsenal v Nottingham Forest
(-) Coventry v Leicester
(2) Leeds v Everton
(3) Sunderland v Manchester Utd

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	28	16	9	3	56	31	57
Liverpool	28	15	8	5	46	21	53
Arsenal	29	14	9	6	47	26	51
Newcastle	27	14	6	7	51	31	48
Aston Villa	29	13	7	9	35	27	46
Sheff Wed	28	11	12	5	37	32	45
Wimbledon	27	12	8	7	39	32	44
Chelsea	27	11	10	6	42	38	43
Leicester	27	10	6	11	33	38	36
Leeds	28	10	6	12	23	31	36
Tottenham	28	10	5	13	34	38	35
Everton	28	8	9	11	36	42	33
Blackburn	27	7	11	9	28	26	32
Derby	29	7	11	11	31	44	32
Coventry	29	6	11	12	26	39	29
Sunderland	28	7	8	13	23	38	29
Nottm Forest	28	6	9	13	24	43	27
Southampton	27	6	7	14	37	46	25
West Ham	27	6	7	14	24	37	25
† Middlesbro	27	6	7	14	37	49	22

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

Nationwide League
First division
(4) Birmingham v Southend
(5) Bolton v Swindon
(6) Bradford v Grimsby
(7) Charlton v Crystal Palace
(8) Manchester City v Oldham
(9) Norwich v Port Vale
(10) * Oxford Utd v West Bromwich
(11) QPR v Huddersfield
(12) Stoke v Ipswich
(13) Wolverhampton v Tranmere

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	36	20	12	4	73	46	72
Wolves	35	18	8	9	49	33	62
* Barnsley	34	16	11	7	57	42	59
* Sheff Utd	35	16	10	9	61	40	58
Norwich	36	15	9	12	54	55	54
C Palace	34	14	11	9	64	36	53
Ipswich	35	13	13	9	50	44	52
Stoke	34	14	9	11	43	44	51
Tranmere	34	14	8	12	46	43	50
Port Vale	36	12	14	10	43	42	50
Portsmouth	35	14	8	13	42	39	50
Swindon	36	14	7	15	50	47	49
West Brom	36	10	14	12	58	61	44
QPR	35	11	11	13	45	48	44
Huddersfield	36	11	11	14	41	50	44
Oxford Utd	35	12	7	16	47	48	43
Reading	34	11	10	13	45	52	43
Charlton	34	12	7	15	41	49	43
Man City	33	12	6	15	43	45	42
Birmingham	33	10	10	13	37	41	40
Bradford	35	8	10	17	35	56	34
Southend	36	7	12	17	34	66	33
Grimsby	34	7	10	17	43	63	31
Oldham	33	7	10	16	34	45	31

** not including last night's match*

Second division
(14) Burnley v Peterborough
(15) Gillingham v Watford
(16) Luton v Millwall
(17) Notts County v Crewe
(18) Plymouth v Rotherham
(19) Preston v Brentford
(20) Stockport v Bury
(21) Walsall v Shrewsbury
(22) Wycombe v Bristol Rovers
(23) York v Blackpool

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brentford	33	16	13	4	50	30	61
Luton	32	16	9	7	58	35	57
Bury	32	15	10	7	46	32	55
Millwall	34	15	9	10	44	42	54
Crewe	32	17	2	13	45	38	53
Walsall	33	15	7	11	46	33	52
Watford	32	12	16	4	35	23	52
Bristol City	34	14	9	11	52	39	51
Burnley	35	14	9	12	50	39	51
Stockport	31	13	10	8	43	34	49
Chesterfield	32	13	10	9	29	25	49
Wrexham	31	11	15	5	36	31	48
Blackpool	33	11	12	10	42	36	45
Bournemouth	36	11	10	15	31	37	43
Preston	35	12	6	17	37	47	42
Shrewsbury	36	10	11	15	43	56	41
Gillingham	33	11	8	14	39	45	41
Bristol Rov	34	10	11	13	36	37	41
Plymouth	34	9	12	13	37	48	39
York	34	10	8	16	37	53	38
Peterborough	35	8	12	15	47	59	36
Wycombe	34	9	8	17	32	45	35
Notts County	34	5	11	18	24	44	26
Rotherham	33	4	12	17	25	48	24

Third division
(24) Brighton v Leyton Orient
(25) Chester v Barnet
(26) Doncaster v Hull
(27) Fulham v Scarborough
(28) Hereford v Northampton
(29) Lincoln v Hartlepool
(30) Mansfield v Cardiff
(31) Rochdale v Wigan
(32) Scunthorpe v Carlisle
(33) Swansea v Exeter
(34) Torquay v Darlington

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlisle	35	21	9	5	56	31	72
Wigan	35	20	7	8	65	43	67
Fulham	35	19	8	8	59	35	65
Swansea	36	16	6	14	46	41	54
* Camb Utd	35	16	6	13	44	46	54
Chester	35	14	12	9	41	33	54
Cardiff	34	16	5	13	43	40	53
Scarborough	35	13	13	9	51	44	52
* Colchester	35	12	16	7	50	39	52
Northampton	35	14	9	12	55	38	51
Mansfield	35	12	13	10	38	34	49
Hull	35	11	15	9	34	36	48
Scunthorpe	34	14	5	15	48	50	47
Lincoln	36	12	10	14	49	57	46
Barnet	35	10	15	10	35	34	45
Torquay	35	12	7	16	36	44	43
Rochdale	35	9	15	11	41	44	42
L Orient	36	10	11	15	32	39	41
Exeter	36	10	9	17	35	50	39
Hartlepool	36	10	8	18	39	54	38
Darlington	35	10	7	18	51	64	37
Hereford	36	9	9	18	40	54	36
Doncaster	34	9	8	19	36	57	33
† Brighton	36	9	7	20	41	58	32

† Brighton deducted two points
** not including last night's match*

Vauxhall Conference
(—) Bath v Bromsgrove
(—) Gateshead v Woking
(—) Hayes v Morecambe
(—) Kettering v Rushden & Diamonds
(35) Kidderminster v Halifax
(36) Southport v Farnborough
(37) Stalybridge v Altrincham
(38) Stevenage v Northwich
(39) Telford v Slough
(40) Welling v Macclesfield

Tennents Scottish Cup
Fifth round
(—) Dundee United v Motherwell
(—) * Falkirk v Raith
(—) Greenock Morton v Kilmarnock

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division
(—) Hibernian v Dunfermline

First division
(—) Partick v Airdrie

Second division
(41) Ayr v Queen of South
(42) Clyde v Stranraer
(43) Dumbarton v Berwick
(—) *Hamilton v Brechin*
(44) Livingston v Stenhousemuir

Third division
(45) Alloa v Albion
(46) Arbroath v Forfar
(47) Montrose v East Stirling
(48) Queen's Park v Inverness CT
(49) Ross County v Cowdenbeath

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: *Ashford v Atherstone*; Cheltenham v Worcester City; Crawley v Cambridge City; Gloucester v Sudbury Tn; Gresley v Newport AFC; Halesowen v Hastings; King's Lynn v Dorchester; Merthyr v Gravesend and Northfleet; Salisbury v Burton Albion; Sittingbourne v *Chelmsford*. Midland division: Bilston v Tamworth; Corby v Evesham; Grantham v Sutton Coldfield Town; Ilkeston v Stourbridge; Paget R v Raunds T; RC Warwick v Moor Green; Shepshed D v Rothwell; Stafford v Bedworth. Southern division: Buckingham Town v *Trowbridge*; Cinderford v Bashley; Clevedon v Dartford; Erith and Belvedere v Fareham; Fleet T v Havant; Margate v Waterlooville; Newport IoW v Fisher London; St Leonards v *Cirencester Town*; Tonbridge Angels v Weston-super-Mare; Weymouth v Witney.

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v Ton Pentre; Bangor City v Cwmbran; Barry v Holywell; Briton Ferry v Cemaes Bay; Carmarthen Town v Caersws; Connah's Quay v Inter *Cable-Tel*; Conwy v *Ebbw Vale* (2.30); Newtown v Flint Town; Rhyl v Porthmadog; Welshpool v Caernarfon (2.30).

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Chipstead v Reading *Town*; Corinthian-Casuals v Bedfont; Cove v Netherne; Cranleigh v Ash; Farnham v Ashford; Godalming and Guildford v Cobham; Merstham v Sandhurst; Raynes Park Vale v Hartley Wintney; Walton Casuals v Westfield. Cup: Semi-final: Feltham v Viking Sports

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Bamber Bridge v Buxton, Barrow v Altrincham; Blyth Spartans v Colwyn Bay; Frickley v Accrington Stanley; Guiseley v Winsford; Hyde v Knowsley; Lancaster v Boston; Leek v Emley; Marine v Gainsborough; Runcorn v Chorley; Witton v Spennymoor. First division: Atherton LR v Whitley Bay; Curzon Ashton v Lincoln United; Droylsden v Radcliffe; Farsley Celtic v Warrington; Flixton v Matlock Town; Great Harwood v Stocksbridge PS; Gretna v Ashton United; Leigh v Bradford Pk Ave; Netherfield v Eastwood Town; Workington v Harrogate Town; Worksop v Congleton

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Boreham Wood v Dulwich; Carshalton v Bromley; Enfield v Yeading; Harrow v Yeovil; Hendon v Chertsey; Heybridge v Bishop's Stortford; Hitchin v Grays; Kingstonian v Dagenham and Redbridge; Purfleet v Sutton United; St Albans v Oxford City; Staines v Aylesbury. First division: Abingdon Town v Barton Rovers; Aldershot Town v Walton and Hersham; Basingstoke v Worthing; Berkhamsted v Marlow; Bognor Regis v Whyteleafe; Canvey Island v Thame; Croydon v Maidenhead United; Leyton Pennant v Billericay; Tooting and Mitcham v Molesey; Uxbridge v Chesham; Wokingham v Hampton. Second division: Banstead v Barking; Bedford T v Bracknell; Collier Row and Romford v H Hempstead; Horsham v Hungerford; Leatherhead v Cheshunt; Leighton Town v Edgware; Metropolitan Police v Wivenhoe; Tilbury v Egham; Wembley v Dorking; Windsor and Eton v Chalfont St Peter; Witham v Ware. Third division: Braintree v Epsom and Ewell; Camberley v Harlow; East Thurrock v Aveley; Flackwell Heath v Hornchurch; Hertford v Wingate and Finchley; Northwood v Kingsbury; Tring v Clapton; Wealdstone v Lewes

LONDON SPARTAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Beaconsfield SYCOB v Brook House; Brimsdown v Amersham; Cockfosters v Barkingside; Harefield v Ruislip Manor; Islington St Marys v Hanwell; St Margaretsbury v Waltham Abbey; Woodford v Croydon.

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Basildon U v Bowers; Brentwood v Stansted; Eton Manor v Burnham Ramblers; Great Wakering v Saffron Walden; Hullbridge Sports v East Ham; Ilford v Concord Rangers; Sawbridgeworth v Ford United

MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: *Premier division*: Arlesey v London Colney; Hoddesdon v Buckingham Athletic; Langford v Royston; Letchworth v Welwyn Garden; Milton Keynes v Bedford; Potters Bar v Brache Sparta; Toddington v Biggleswade

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bideford v Bristol Manor Farm; Bridgwater v Torrington; Bridport v Elmore; Backwell v Barnstaple; Brislington v Calne; Westbury v Taunton

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Diss v Tiptree; Fakenham v Clacton; Felixstowe P and T v Bury Town; Gorleston v Sudbury Res; Halstead v Wisbech; Harwich and Parkeston v Soham; March v Wroxham; Newmarket v Hadleigh U; Stowmarket v Watton; Warboys v Great Yarmouth; Woodbridge Town v Sudbury

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Lymington v Petersfield; Andover v Thatcham Town; BAT v East Cowes; Bemerton Heath v Ryde Sports; Bournemouth v Brockenhurst; Christchurch v Whitchurch; Romsey v Aerostructures; Wimborne Town v Downton

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Eastbourne Town v Arundel; Hassocks v Southwick; Langney Sports v Horsham YMCA; Mile Oak v Hailsham; Oakwood v Pagham; Peacehaven and Telscombe v Portfield; Ringmer v Wick; Selsey v Saltdean; Shoreham v Three Bridges; Whitehawk v Burgess Hill

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Deveronvale; Fort William v Cove; Fraserburgh v Keith; Huntly v Elgin; Lossiemouth v Buckie Thistle; Peterhead v Nairn County; Rothes v Brora

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: Arthur Dunn Cup: Semi-finals: Foresters v Brentwoods; Malvernians v Salopians. *Premier division*: Lancing v Chigwellians; Reptonians v Etonians; Wykehamists v Cholmeleians.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Canterbury v Corinthian; Crockenhill v Deal; Hythe v Faversham; Lordswood v Cray; Ramsgate v Sheppey; Slade Green v *Thamesmead*; *Whitstable Town* v Beckenham; Woolwich v Folkestone Invicta

HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Almondsbury v Banbury; Bicester v Abingdon United; Burnham v Carterton; Fairford v Brackley; Highworth v Endsleigh; North Leigh v *Didcot*; Shortwood v Wantage; Swindon Supermarine v Lambourn Sports. Cup: Semi-final, second leg: Kintbury (3) v Tuffley (1)

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Bourne v Ford Sports; Desborough v Wootton; Holbeach v Eynesbury; *Long Buckby* v Stamford; Newport Pagnell v Cogenhoe; Northampton Spencer v Boston; Potton v Wellingborough; Spalding v Stotfold

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Barwell v Willenhall; Bloxwich Town v Knypersley V; *Boldmere St M v Bridgnorth*; Chasetown v Blakenhall; Halesowen H v Hinckley Athletic; Oldbury U v Pelsall V; Rushall O v W Mid Police; Shifnal T v Rocester; Stapenhill v Pershore T; Stratford T v Sandwell

ENDSLEIGH MIDLAND COMBINATION: *Premier division*: Bolehall S v Kenilworth; Coventry Sphinx v Studley BKL; Handrahan Timbers v Highgate; Kings Heath v Alvechurch; Knowle v West Midland Fire Service; Massey Ferguson v Coleshill; Shirley v Richmond Swifts; Southam v Bilston Community College; Worcestero v Wellesbourne

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Blowich S v Hill Top R; Brierley Hill T v Ludlow T; Darlaston v Wolverhampton C; Ettingshall HT v Lye Town; Gornal Res v Wolverhampton United; Stourport S v Cradley Town; Tividale v Walsall Wood; Westfields v Stafford T

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: *First division*: Bootle v Clitheroe; Chadderton v Rossendale; Glossop North End v Darwen; Holker Old Boys v Eastwood H; Kidsgrove v Atherton Collieries; Mossley v Burscough; Prescot Cables v Maine Road; Salford v St Helens; Vauxhall GM v Blackpool Rovers. Cup: Semi-finals, first leg: Nantwich Town v Trafford; Newcastle Town v Penrith

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Armthorpe Welfare v *Pontefract Cols*; Ashfield v *Belper Town*; Brigg Town v Selby; Glasshoughton Welfare v Denaby; Hallam v Hatfield Main; Liversedge v Ossett Albion; Maltby MW v North Ferriby; Ossett Town v Hucknall Town; Pickering v Sheffield; Thackley v Arnold

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Chester-le-Street v Shildon; Consett v Bedlington Terriers; Dunston Federation v Whickham; Durham v Morpeth; Murton v RTM Newcastle; Seaham Red Star v Billingham; South Shields v Easington; Tow Law v Guisborough; Whitby v Crook

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ards v Coleraine; Cliftonville v Glentoran; Glenavon v Crusaders; Linfield v Portadown. First division: Ballymena v Bangor; Carrick v Distillery; Larne v Newry; Omagh v Ballyclare

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Arsenal v Queens Park Rangers (11.0); Gillingham v Millwall (10.45); Leyton Orient v Fulham (11.0); Norwich v Watford (11.0); Southend v Charlton (11.0); Tottenham v Ipswich (11.0); West Ham v Portsmouth (11.0). Second division: Bristol City v Crystal Palace (11.0); Bristol Rovers v Brentford (11.0); Colchester v Bournemouth (12.0); Luton v Wycombe (11.0); Oxford Utd v Swindon (11.0); Reading v Brighton (11.0); Southampton v Barnet (11.0)

OLD BOYS LEAGUE: Premier division: Old Meadonians v Glyn OB; Old Tenisonians v Latymer OB; Old Vaughanians v Old Kingsburians

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: First division: *Crouch End Vampires* v Civil Service; NatWest Bank v East Barnet OG; Norsemen v West Wickham; Old Esthameians v Carshalton; Old Parmiterians v South Bank Polytechnic v Old Actonians

SOUTHERN OLYMPIAN LEAGUE: Senior one: Alleynian v Southgate County; *Hale End* Ath v Ulysses; Nottsborough v Old Finchleians; Parkfield v Witan; Wandsworth Hale v St Mary's Coll

RUGBY LEAGUE

Silk Cut Challenge Cup
Quarter-finals
Warrington v Salford (3.0)

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Premier division: Mayfield v Saddleworth (2.30). First division: Blackbrook v Barrow Island (2.30); Leigh East v Oulton (2.30); Moldgreen v Walney Central (2.30). Second division: Eccles v Redhill (2.30); Hull Dockers v New Earswick (2.30)

BNFL CUP: Fourth round: Askam v East Leeds; Beverley v Skirlaugh; BRK v Farnworth; Clayton v Ince ABI; Dudley Hill v West Hull; East Hull v Fells; Ellenborough R v Thatto Heath; Hensingham v Siddal; Lock Lane v Shaw Cross; Milford v Wigan St Jude's; Normanton v Dewsbury M; Queens v Walnut W; Thornhill v Wigan St Patrick's; West Bowling v Waterhead; Wigan St Cuthbert's v Oldham; Wigan Tech v Woolston R

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 2.30 unless stated

Courage Clubs Championship
First division
Bath v London Irish (3.0)
Leicester v West Hartlepool (3.0)
Orrell v Harlequins (3.0)

Second division
Bedford v Waterloo (3.0)
Coventry v Blackheath (3.0)
London Scottish v Richmond (3.0)
Moseley v Rugby (3.0)
Newcastle v Wakefield (3.0)
Rotherham v Nottingham (3.0)

Third division
Clifton v Rosslyn Park (3.0)
Fylde v Reading (3.0)
Havant v Otley (3.0)
London Welsh v Leeds (3.0)
Lydney v Harrogate (3.0)
Morley v Wharfedale (3.0)
Redruth v Exeter (3.0)
Walsall v Liverpool St Helens (3.0)

FOURTH DIVISION NORTH: Kendal v Lichfield (3.0); *Manchester v Sandal (3.0)*; Nuneaton v Hereford (3.0); Sheffield v Aspatria (3.0); Stoke-on-Trent v Winnington Park (3.0); Stourbridge v Birmingham/Solihull (3.0); Worcester v Preston Grasshoppers (3.0).

FOURTH DIVISION SOUTH: Askeans v *North Walsham (3.0)*; Berry Hill v Metropolitan Police (3.0); Camberley v Tabard (3.0); Charlton Park v Barking (3.0); High Wycombe v Henley (3.0); Newbury v Weston-super-Mare (3.0); Plymouth v Cheltenham (3.0)

SOUTH WEST: First division: Brixham v St *Ives*; *Gloucester Old Boys v Maidenhead*; Launceston v Barnstaple; Matson v Camborne; Salisbury v Bridgwater; Torquay v Stroud

MIDLANDS: First division: Barkers Butts v Syston; Belgrave v Stockwood Park; *Broadstreet* v Stafford; Burton v Scunthorpe; Camp Hill v Mansfield; Derby v Leighton Buzzard; Hinckley v Leamington; Wolverhampton v Westleigh

NORTH: First division: Bradford and Bingley v Bridlington; Hull Ionians v Stockton; Sedgley Park v New Brighton; West Park Bramhope v Macclesfield; Widnes v Broughton Park.

CIS COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Semi-finals: Cornwall v Cumbria (at Camborne); Somerset v Northumberland (at Bridgwater, 3.0)

Welsh League
First division
Caerphilly v Treorchy
Cardiff v Newbridge
Neath v Bridgend
Newport v Ebbw Vale
Pontypridd v Dunvant
Swansea v Llanelli

Second division
Abercynon v Blackwood
Abertillery v South Wales Police
Bonymaen v Aberavon
Cross Keys v Maesteg
Llandovery v Ystradgynlais
Cardiff Institute v Pontypool

THIRD DIVISION: Builth Wells v Pyle; Mountain Ash v Merthyr; Penarth v Narberth; Rumney v Tenby United; Tredegar v Llanharan; Tondu v Kenfig Hill

Tennents Premiership
First division
Currie v Melrose (3.0)
Hawick v Stirling County (3.0)
Jed-Forest v Heriot's FP (3.0)

Second division
Dundee HSFP v Biggar (3.0)
Glasgow HK v Kelso (3.0)
Gala v Edinburgh Acads (3.0)
Glasgow Acads v West of Scotland (3.0)

THIRD DIVISION: Kirkcaldy v Glasgow Southern (3.0); Stewart's Melville FP v Kilmarnock (3.0)

FOURTH DIVISION: Hillhead/Jordanhill v Gordonians (3.0)

Insurance Corporation League
First division
Cork Constitution v Old Wesley
Dungannon v Young Munster
Instonians v Blackrock College
Lansdowne v Ballymena
Old Crescent v Terenure Coll
Shannon v Old Belvedere
St Mary's College v Garryowen

Second division
Bective Rangers v Wanderers
Derry v Clontarf
Highfield v Greystones
NIFC v Dolphin
Skerries v Monkstown
Sunday's Well v DLSP
UCC v Malone

INTERNATIONAL MATCH: Scotland Under-19 v England Colts (at Stirling)

CLUB MATCH: Cambridge University v Waseda University (3.0)

HOCKEY

NASTRO AZZURRO LEAGUE: Premier League: Ashford v Spencer; Beckenham v *Fareham*; *Bournemouth v Anchorians*; Hampstead/Westminster v Gore Court; High Wycombe v Chichester; Ramgarhia v Wokingham; Richmond v Maidenhead; Tunbridge Wells v Old Whitgiftians; Wimbledon v Woking. Hampshire/Surrey: Andover v Cheam; *Basingstoke v Goan*; *Southampton* v Dulwich; Blandford v Oxted; Purley v Barnes; Petersfield v Old Cranleighans; London University v Epsom; Old Mid-Whitgiftians v Old Walcountians; Oxshott v Portsmouth. Kent/Sussex: Eastbourne v Worthing; Horsham v *Ashford*; *Marden Russets v Belvedere*; Middleton v Bognor; Mid Sussex v Brighton; Old Bordenians v Herne Bay; Old Holcombeians v Bexley Invicta; Old Williamsonians v Blackheath; Sevenoaks v Bexleyheath; Tulse Hill v Lloyds Bank. Middx/Berks/Bucks and Oxon: *Farnham Common* v *Richings Park*; Gerrards Cross v Eastcote; Heyes v Bracknell; Lions v Staines; Marlow v Harrow; Mill Hill v Headington; Milton Keynes v Amersham; OMT v Sunbury; PHC Chiswick v Newbury; West Hampstead v City of Oxford

NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Ben Rhydding v Ramgarhia; Formby v Norton; Neston v Harrogate; Sheffield Bankers v Chester; Springfields v Southport; Swalwell v Timperley.

DTZ DEBENHAM THORPE MIDLAND LEAGUE: Premier division: Bloxwich v Blossomfield; Khalsa v Coventry and North Warwickshire; Loughborough Students v Hampton-in-Arden; North Nottinghamshire v Harborne; Nottingham v Olton and West Warwickshire

ADNAMS EAST LEAGUE: Premier division A: Bishop's Stortford v Redbridge and Ilford; Cambridge City v Chelmsford; Cambridge University v Dereham; Peterborough Town v Ipswich; Sudbury v Colchester. Premier division B: Bury St Edmunds v Bedford Town; Clacton v Ipswich and East Suffolk; Huntingdon v *Old Southendian*; *Norwich City* v Luton Town; Romford v Westcliff

WOMEN'S CLUB MATCHES: Bath v Redland; Cambridge City v Peterborough; Canterbury v Tulse Hill; Hampstead v Woking; Hendon v Bracknell; Old Loughton*ians v Cheltenham*; Reading v Hampton; Redbridge v Bury St Edmunds; St Albans v Blueharts; West Witney v Wimbledon.

WOMEN'S WELSH LEAGUE: Cardiff Ath v Colwyn Bay; Haverfordwest v Pontypridd; Penarth v Cardiff Inst; Swansea v Newtown.

WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: *North (at Prescot, 10.30)*: *Cheshire* v Cumbria; Lancashire v Yorkshire; Northumberland v Cheshire; LCL v Humberside; Humberside v Cumbria; Yorkshire v LCL. West *(at Bournemouth, 10.30)*: Gloucestershire v Herefordshire; Devon v Somerset; *Cornwall v Dorset*; *Devon v Gloucestershire*; Dorset v Somerset; Cornwall v Herefordshire

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: English cross country championships (at Havant)

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Crystal *Palace* v Chester (7.30); Manchester v Worthing (7.30); Birmingham v Sheffield (7.30); Hemel and Watford v Derby (7.30). National League: Men: First division: Cardiff v Westminster (8.0); Mid Sussex v Coventry (7.30); Nottingham v Guildford (8.0); Oxford v Bury and Bolton (8.0); Plymouth v Stockton (7.30). Second division: Aston v South Wales (7.30); Flintshire v Swindon (7.30); Northampton v Bournemouth (6.0); Sheffield v Thames Valley (6.0); Slough v South Bank (6.0). Women: *First division*: Ipswich v Crystal Palace (7.30); London v Rhondda (6.0); Northampton v Harlesden (8.0); Nottingham v *Thames Valley* (6.0); Sheffield v Barking and Dagenham (4.0); Spelthorne v Birmingham (6.0). Second division: Play-offs: *Quarter-finals: Leicester v Solent (4.0)*; Liverpool v Chelmsford (1.0); Manchester v Plymouth (4.0)

BOWLS: Yetton Trophy (at New Earswick)

BOXING: World Boxing Organisation intercontinental championship (vacant): Steve *Robinson (Wales) v Tomas Santos Serrano* (Mex) (at Brentford)

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague play-offs: Group A: Newcastle v Ayr (6.30). Group B: Nottingham v Sheffield (6.0); Basingstoke v Bracknell (6.30)

LACROSSE: *Shepherds Friendly Society* League: Premier division: Cheadle v Poynton; Cheadle Hulme v Timperley; Mellor v Hulmeians; Moorthorpe v Stockport; Old Waconians v Heaton Mersey.

ROWING: Women's Head of the River (Tideway)

VOLLEYBALL: National League: Women: First division: Leeds v London Malory (2.30)

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

** denotes all-ticket match*

FA Cup
Sixth round
* Chesterfield v Wrexham (11.30)
* Portsmouth v Chelsea (1.30)
Sheffield Wed v Wimbledon (4.10)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Baldock v Dorchester (2.0)

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Home Farm v Dundalk (3.15). Cup: Quarter-finals: Bray v Shelbourne (3.15); Derry v Cork (3.0)

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL MATCH: England v Scotland (at Bramall Lane, 11.0)

RUGBY UNION

Courage Clubs Championship
First division
Sale v Northampton (3.0)
Saracens v Bristol (3.0)
Wasps v Gloucester
(at Loftus Road, 3.0)

CIS UNDER-21 COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Semi-final: Dorset and Wiltshire v Surrey (at Bournemouth, 2.15)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Silk Cut Challenge Cup
Quarter-finals
* Keighley v St Helens
Leeds v Featherstone
Oldham v Bradford

First division
Hull KR v Wakefield
Swinton v *Huddersfield*
Widnes v Workington

Second division
Barrow v Hunslet
Batley v Prescot (3.15)
Doncaster v Carlisle (2.0)
Lancashire Lynx v Bramley
York v Rochdale

HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Cannock v Teddington (at Morris Ground 2.30); Canterbury v Hounslow (at Polo Farm, 1.0); East Grinstead v Old *Loughtonians* (at Saint Hill, 2.0); Havant v Barford Tigers (at Havant College, 2.15); Reading v Guildford (at Sonning Lane, 2.0); Southgate v Surbiton (at Broomfield School 2.30). First division: Bournville v Hull (at King Edward's Girls' School, Birmingham, 2.30); Bromley v Blueharts (at Prior, Leisure Centre, 1.0); Brooklands v Beeston (at George's Road, Sale, 2.0); City of Portsmouth v *Indian Gymkhana (at Alexandra* Park, Portsmouth, 1.30); Crostyn v Isca (at Chigwell, 1.0); Doncaster v Lewes (at Bennetthorpe, 2.0); Edgbaston v Oxford Hawks (at Birmingham University, 1.0); Firebrands v Oxford University (at *Longwood, Bristol, 1.0)*; *Gloucester City* v Sheffield (at Peck Court, 1.30); Warrington v St Albans (at Penketh County School, 1.0); Trojans v Stourport (at Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh, 1.0)

REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES: Men: England v Nottingham (1.0). *Women*: England v Ipswich (11.30) (both at Milton Keynes)

WOMEN'S WELSH CUP: Quarter-finals: Buckley v Cardiff Athletic; Colwyn Bay v Swansea; Newtown v Cardiff Institute; Penarth v Carmarthen

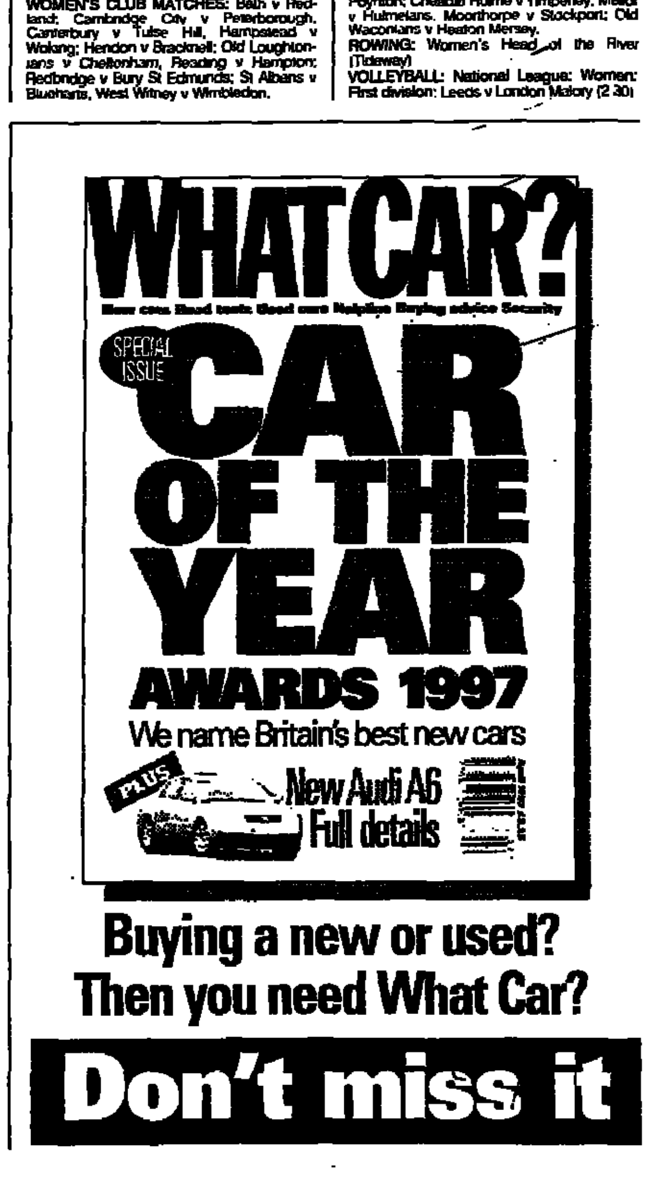
WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Midlands (at Aldersley, Wolverhampton, 10.0): Northamptonshire v Warwickshire; Staffordshire v Leicestershire; Leicestershire v *Warwickshire*; Derbyshire v Northamptonshire. North (at Prescot, 9.30): Manchester v Durham; Cheshire v LCL; Northumberland v Manchester League; Cheshire v Durham; Cumbria v Yorkshire; Lancashire v Humberside. South (at Canterbury, 9.30): Surrey v Kent; Berkshire v Middlesex; Sussex v Oxfordshire; Surrey v Berkshire; Middlesex v Sussex; Kent v Oxfordshire. West (at Bournemouth, 10.30): Cornwall v Gloucestershire; Somerset v Herefordshire; Devon v Dorset; Gloucestershire v Somerset; Cornwall v Devon; Herefordshire v Dorset

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: London v Leopards (6.30); Thames Valley v Leicester (6.0); Chester v Hemel and Watford (6.0). National League: Men: First division: Brixton v Solent (4.0); Liverpool v *Ware (2.30)*; *Oxford v Mid Sussex (4.0)*. Second division: Derby v Flintshire (2.0); London v Chessington (2.30); Swindon v Solihull (4.0). Women: Second division: Play-offs: Quarter-final: Tyne and Wear v Doncaster (2.0)

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague play-offs: Group A: Ayr v Cardiff (6.0); Manchester v Newcastle (6.0). Group B: Bracknell v Sheffield (6.0)

VOLLEYBALL: National League: Women: First division: Roebuck Liverpool City v Manchester United Salford (1.45); Essex Estonians v Sheffield Wednesday (1.30); Orpington v Ashcombe Guildford (2.30); Britannia Music City v Loughborough (2.0)



WHAT CAR?
SPECIAL ISSUE
CAR OF THE YEAR
AWARDS 1997
We name Britain's best new cars
PLUS
New Audi A6
Full details
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THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP AND FA CUP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL

Dennis Bergkamp should be able to lead Arsenal through a plainly petrified Forest. The brilliant 17-year-old French prodigy, Nicolas Anelka, could make an early debut in attack, if Paul Merson is unfit. Fed-up with being left out of Paris Saint-Germain's first team, Anelka was delighted to have been brought to Highbury by his compatriot, Arsène Wenger. John Lukic, clearly finding form and confidence, continues in goal in the absence of David Seaman. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

Brian Little, the manager, is extending his scouting network to Australia — birthplace of Mark Bosnich, the Villa goalkeeper, and original home of sundry other "Socceroos" now plying their trade in Europe. Little has linked up with Roy McLaren, the former Villa assistant manager, who runs a highly successful football academy Down Under. "Anything that can produce talent for us has to be considered," Little said. "It would be foolhardy to ignore what is available over a wider field." **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Blackburn are idle in the Premiership because of Middlesbrough's commitments in the FA Cup at Derby. The future, however, is brightening all the time. Tony Parkes, the caretaker-manager, has added youngster Damien Duff to the first-team roster and believes Roy Hodgson will inherit an exciting young squad. "We've got several teenagers on the verge of the first team, and our hard work with the youth policy will soon be paying dividends," he said. **DM**

CHELSEA

Eddie Newton has had a knee operation and his energy is clearly missed in midfield. Ruud Gullit's fractured ankle will probably keep him out until the end of the season. Reassuring for Chelsea is the impressive form of Grodas in goal, but their defence looks strangely suspect when high balls come into the box. Against first division defenders, Gianfranco Zola might find more space but Gianluca Vialli has been making disappointingly little difference when coming on as substitute. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Gordon Strachan, the manager, reckons he will have snapped up an £800,000 bargain in the shape of Aleksandr Evtushok, once the former Dnepr central defender has adjusted to the rigours of life in the Premiership. Perhaps Strachan, still fighting to save the club from relegation, should have investigated the Ukrainian's background a bit more closely. Evtushok, 27, has spent the past two years studying for a degree at the University of Kiev. His course? Football management. **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

Derby enter their FA Cup quarter-final against Middlesbrough this afternoon having conceded 16 goals in their past five fixtures, six of them to Middlesbrough in the Premiership on Wednesday. Jim Smith, the manager, is expected to recall Paul McGrath today, while the return to fitness of Chris Powell allows Gary Rowett to move to the back three from left wing-back, where he has been tentative. Dean Sturridge, the leading scorer, is suspended. **RH**

EVERTON

After throwing away a lead at Southampton in midweek, Everton's need for greater defensive security was revealed in a £4.25 million bid for Slaven Bilic, of West Ham. "I've admired him since he came to this country," Joe Royle, the manager, said. In the meantime, Paul Gerrard's groin injury means that they go to Leeds today with the same defence, Neville Southall continuing in goal. Paul Rideout looks likely to stay, his move to Japan now officially "on the back-burner". **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

Carlton Palmer may return to the defence this week, and David Wetherall keeps his place in the Leeds line-up. Kelly completes a two-match suspension, and Radebe starts one. Lee Bowyer, who was replaced at half-time by Palmer last Saturday, is fit to return in midfield. The Yeboah saga rolls on, with the forward's agent meeting the Leeds chairman last week. "You'll have to ask the chairman what it was about. I don't know," George Graham, the manager, said. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

Steve Claridge seems an unlikely subject for an autobiography but his story is published later this month and it is a footballing tale with a difference. Nothing has been simple. He overcame a heart problem to appear for a succession of non-league and lower-division clubs, working part-time as a gardener and greengrocer. He rowed with managers, gambled heavily and is now involved in a door-to-door egg delivery service. Despite a shoulder problem, he plays against Coventry today. **RH**

LIVERPOOL

Stan Collymore went Awol last Tuesday, the third time he has missed training without ringing in an excuse. Even Roy Evans is fast approaching the limits of a tether that was seemingly endless and more dramatic action could follow. The manager is impressed with SK Brann's Tore Andre Flo and, should Liverpool beat the Norwegians in the Cup Winners' Cup, he could arrive at Anfield to herald Collymore's hasty cut-priced departure before the transfer deadline at the end of the month. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

Gary Pallister is United's only serious injury doubt, with a groin strain, but Alex Ferguson, the manager, will wait until this morning to decide whether any of the other players need a rest after the emotional high of Wednesday night at Old Trafford. "I might decide to freshen it up with one or two changes," he said. Keane is suspended. If Pallister is not fit, either Johnsen will drop back, or Gary Neville will move into central defence with his brother, Philip, coming in. **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

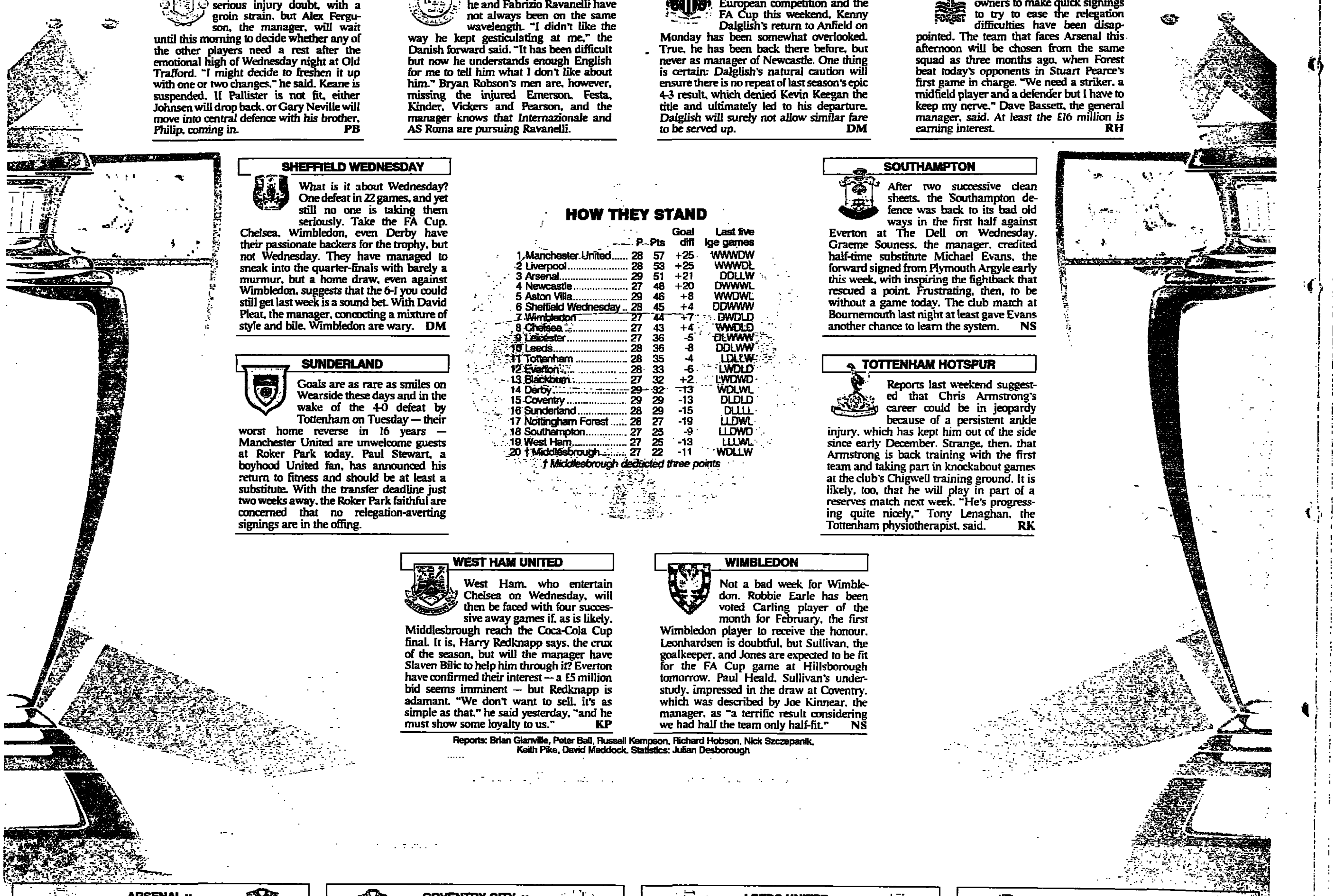
Mikkel Beck has admitted that he and Fabrizio Ravanelli have not always been on the same wavelength. "I didn't like the way he kept gesticulating at me," the Danish forward said. "It has been difficult but now he understands enough English for me to tell him what I don't like about him." Bryan Robson's men are, however, missing the injured Emerson, Festa, Kinder, Vickers and Pearson, and the manager knows that Internazionale and AS Roma are pursuing Ravanelli.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

With all the excitement of European competition and the FA Cup this weekend, Kenny Dalglish's return to Anfield on Monday has been somewhat overlooked. True, he has been back there before, but never as manager of Newcastle. One thing is certain: Dalglish's natural caution will ensure there is no repeat of last season's epic 4-3 result, which denied Kevin Keegan the title and ultimately led to his departure. Dalglish will surely not allow similar fare to be served up. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Supporters expecting the new owners to make quick signings to try to ease the relegation difficulties have been disappointed. The team that faces Arsenal this afternoon will be chosen from the same squad as three months ago, when Forest beat today's opponents in Stuart Pearce's first game in charge. "We need a striker, a midfield player and a defender but I have to keep my nerve." Dave Bassett, the general manager, said. At least the £16 million is earning interest. **RH**



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

What is it about Wednesday? One defeat in 22 games, and yet still no one is taking them seriously. Take the FA Cup. Chelsea, Wimbledon, even Derby have their passionate backers for the trophy, but not Wednesday. They have managed to sneak into the quarter-finals with barely a murmur, but a home draw, even against Wimbledon, suggests that the 6-1 you could still get last week is a sound bet. With David Pleat, the manager, concocting a mixture of style and bile, Wimbledon are wary. **DM**

SUNDERLAND

Goals are as rare as smiles on Wearside these days and in the wake of the 4-0 defeat by Tottenham on Tuesday — their worst home reverse in 16 years — Manchester United are unwelcome guests at Roker Park today. Paul Stewart, a boyhood United fan, has announced his return to fitness and should be at least a substitute. With the transfer deadline just two weeks away, the Roker Park faithful are concerned that no relegation-averting signings are in the offing.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Manchester United	28	57	+25	WWWDW
2 Liverpool	28	53	+25	WWWDL
3 Arsenal	29	51	+21	DDLLW
4 Newcastle	27	48	+20	DWWWL
5 Aston Villa	29	46	+8	WWDWL
6 Sheffield Wednesday	28	45	+4	DDWWW
7 Wimbledon	27	44	+7	DWDLD
8 Chelsea	27	43	+4	WWDLD
9 Leicester	27	36	-5	DLWWW
10 Leeds	28	36	-8	DDLWW
11 Tottenham	28	35	-4	LDLLW
12 Everton	28	33	-6	LWDLD
13 Blackburn	27	32	+2	LWDWD
14 Derby	29	32	-13	WDLWL
15 Coventry	29	29	-13	DLDLD
16 Sunderland	28	29	-15	DLLLL
17 Nottingham Forest	28	27	-19	LLDWL
18 Southampton	27	25	-9	LLDWD
19 West Ham	27	25	-13	LLLWL
20 † Middlesbrough	27	22	-11	WDLLW

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

SOUTHAMPTON

After two successive clean sheets, the Southampton defence was back to its bad old ways in the first half against Everton at The Dell on Wednesday. Graeme Souness, the manager, credited half-time substitute Michael Evans, the forward signed from Plymouth Argyle early this week, with inspiring the fightback that rescued a point. Frustrating, then, to be without a game today. The club match at Bournemouth last night at least gave Evans another chance to learn the system. **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Reports last weekend suggested that Chris Armstrong's career could be in jeopardy because of a persistent ankle injury, which has kept him out of the side since early December. Strange, then, that Armstrong is back training with the first team and taking part in knockabout games at the club's Chigwell training ground. It is likely, too, that he will play in part of a reserves match next week. "He's progressing quite nicely," Tony Lenaghan, the Tottenham physiotherapist, said. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

West Ham, who entertain Chelsea on Wednesday, will then be faced with four successive away games if, as is likely, Middlesbrough reach the Coca-Cola Cup final. It is, Harry Redknapp says, the crux of the season, but will the manager have Slaven Bilic to help him through it? Everton have confirmed their interest — a £5 million bid seems imminent — but Redknapp is adamant. "We don't want to sell, it's as simple as that," he said yesterday, "and he must show some loyalty to us." **KP**

WIMBLEDON

Not a bad week for Wimbledon. Robbie Earle has been voted Carling player of the month for February, the first Wimbledon player to receive the honour. Leonhardsen is doubtful, but Sullivan, the goalkeeper, and Jones are expected to be fit for the FA Cup game at Hillsborough tomorrow. Paul Heald, Sullivan's understudy, impressed in the draw at Coventry, which was described by Joe Kinnear, the manager, as "a terrific result considering we had half the team only half-fit." **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough

ARSENAL v NOTTINGHAM FOREST

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-0, 0-2, 1-3 3-0, 1-1, 3-3, 1-1, —, 1-0, 1-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

ARSENAL (from): J Lukic, L Dixon, N Winterburn, A Adams, P Vieira, S Hughes, D Bergkamp, M Keown, S Marshall, D Platt, P Merson, S Morrow, L Harper, P Shaw, I Selley, M Rose, N Anelka.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M Crossley, D Lyttle, S Pearce, C Cooper, S Chettle, N Jerkan, A I Haaland, S Gemmill, I Woan, D Saunders, N Clough, B Roy, S Howe, S Blatherwick, C Armstrong, P McGregor, S Guinan, D Phillips, A Fettis.

COVENTRY CITY v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, —, —, —, —, —, —, —, 4-2, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

COVENTRY CITY (from): S Ogrizovic, R Shaw, G Breen, D Dublin, P Williams, P Telfer, K Richardson, G McAllister, E Jess, N Whelan, D Huckerby, P Ndlovu, B Borrows, A Evtushok, M Hall, G Strachan, J Filan.

LEICESTER CITY (from): K Keller, S Grayson, S Prior, S Guppy, J Lawrence, S Walsh, J Watts, M Izzet, S Taylor, N Lennon, G Parker, S Claridge, M Robins, S Campbell, S Wilson, K Poole.

LEEDS UNITED v EVERTON

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 2-0, 1-0, 2-0, 3-0, 1-0, 2-2

HOW THEY LINE UP

LEEDS UNITED (from) N Martyn, G Halle, D Wetherall, R Molenaar, I Rush, C Palmer, L Bowyer, L Sharpe, I Harte, B Deane, A Yeboah, R Wallace, A Dongo, A Gray, M Ford, M Jackson, M Beeney

EVERTON (from): N Southall, P Gerrard, E Barrett, D Unsworth, T Phelan, D Watson, C Short, A Grant, J Parkinson, D Ferguson, G Speed, G Stuart, M Branch, P Rideout, M Hottiger, J Speare, C Thomson, N Barmby

SUNDERLAND v MANCHESTER UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 2-1, —, —, —, —, —

HOW THEY LINE UP

SUNDERLAND (from) L Perez, G Hall, D Kubicki, R Ord, A Melville, D Kelly, A Rae, K Ball, M Gray, P Bracewell, C Russell, J Mullin, L Howey, D Preece, P Stewart, S Agnew, M Bridges, D Williams

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P Schmeichel, G Neville, D May, G Pallister, D Irwin, D Beckham, R Johnsen, E Cantona, R Giggs, A Cole, O G Solskjaer, B McClair, K Poborsky, P Neville, R van der Gouw, J Cruyff

TODAY: FA CUP SIXTH ROUND

DERBY COUNTY v MIDDLESBROUGH

TICKETS: Sold out

CUP RECORD (home team): P 5, W 2, D 1, L 2, F 6, A 10.

HOW THEY LINE UP

DERBY COUNTY (from): R Hoult, G Rowett, P McGrath, I Stimac, L Carsley, R van der Laan, D Powell, C Dailly, A Asanovic, P Trollope, R Willems, A Ward, M Taylor, P Simpson, S Flynn.

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): B Roberts, N Cox, C Fleming, R Mustoe, M Beck, Juninho, F Ravanelli, C Hignett, A Moore, C Blackmore P Stamp, G Walsh.

TOMORROW: FA CUP SIXTH ROUND

CHESTERFIELD v WREXHAM

TICKETS: Sold out

CUP RECORD (home team): P 3, W 1, D 0, L 2, F 6, A 7

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHESTERFIELD (from). B Mercer, J Hewitt, M Jules, C Perkins, M Williams, C Beaumont, S Gaughan, J Howard, I Dunn, G Lund, S Dyche, P Holland, A Morris, A Mitchell, J Lomas

WREXHAM (from): A Marriott, M Cartwright, M McGregor, D Brace, A Humes, B Jones, B Carey, P Hardy, M Chalk, C Skinner, P Ward, B Hughes, K Russell, G Owen, D Brammer, W Phillips, S Watkin, K Connolly, G Bennett, S Morris.

PORTSMOUTH v CHELSEA

TICKETS: Sold out

CUP RECORD (home team) P 2, W 1, D 1, L 0, F 2, A 1

HOW THEY LINE UP

PORTSMOUTH (from): A Knight, R Pethick, R Perrett, A Thomson, A Awford, P Hall, S Igoe, F Simpson, D Hillier, M Svensson, L Bradbury, A McLoughlin, A Cook, A Dobson.

CHELSEA (from) F Grodas, D Petrescu, F Leboeuf, S Clarke, F Sinclair, S Minto, R Di Matteo, C Burley, G Vialli, E Johnsen, D Wise, P Hughes, A Myers, J Morris, M Nicholls, G Zola, M Hughes, N Colgan

LEADING SCORERS

20: A Shearer (Newcastle United). 18: I Wright (Arsenal). 14: D Yorke (Aston Villa). 13: R Fowler (Liverpool), F Ravanelli (Middlesbrough), L Ferdinand (Newcastle United). 12: O G Solskjaer (Manchester United), M Le Tissier (Southampton). 10: C Sutton (Blackburn Rovers), S Collymore (Liverpool), E Ekoku (Wimbledon). 9: D Dublin (Coventry City), S Claridge (Leicester City).

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

1-4: Manchester United; 9-2: Liverpool; 10-1: Newcastle United; 16-1: Arsenal; 50-1: Aston Villa, Chelsea; 80-1: Wimbledon, Sheffield Wednesday. Odds supplied by Ladbrokes

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v WIMBLEDON

TICKETS: Seats available

CUP RECORD: No previous meeting

HOW THEY LINE UP

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from) K Pressman, M Clarke, P Atherton, D Stefanovic, J Newsome, S Oakes, D Walker, I Nolan, S Nicol, G Whittingham, G Hyde, M Pembridge, R Blinker, R Humphreys, A Booth, D Hirst, L Briscoe, W Collins, O Trustfull, B Carbone.

WIMBLEDON (from): N Sullivan, K Cunningham, A Kimble, V Jones, D Blackwell, O Leonhardsen, R Earle, E Ekoku, D Holdsworth, M Gayle, C Perry, J Goodman, B McAllister, N Ardley, S Castledine, M Harford, D Jupp, A Clarke, P Fear, P Heald, B Murphy.

MONDAY

LIVERPOOL v NEWCASTLE UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 4-0, 1-2, —, —, —, —, 0-2, 2-0, 4-3

HOW THEY LINE UP

LIVERPOOL (from) D James, D Matteo, R Jones, S I Bjornebye, J McAteer, N Ruddock, P Babb, J Barnes, S McManaman, M Thomas, J Redknapp, S Collymore, R Fowler, S Harkness, J Carragher, M Kennedy, A Warner, L Jones, P Berger, B T Kvarme

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S Hislop, P Srnicek, W Barton, J Beresford, D Batty, D Peacock, R Lee, P Beardsley, L Ferdinand, F Asprilla, R Elliott, D Ginola, K Gillespie, S Watson, L Clark, P Albert, J Crawford

10.50pm BBC1 Match of the Day (highlights, includes Derby County v Middlesbrough)

11am Sky Sports 1 Goals on Sunday
1pm Sky Sports 1 Portsmouth v Chelsea (live)
4pm BBC1 Sheffield Wednesday v Wimbledon (live)

7pm Sky Sports 1 Liverpool v Newcastle United (live)

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FOOTBALL

Portsmouth's run of success built on shaky ground

ROB HUGHES

Weekend View

What bitter-sweet games football plays with our emotions. On Wednesday, flying as high as it gets, we had the sublime exhibition from Manchester United in the European Cup. By Thursday, we were taken to the depths again by the Crown Prosecution Service's confirmation that the match-fixing trial, sullying the essence and integrity of the sport, is to go on for months, perhaps years to come.

We are lifted, we are crushed. Yet the weekend comes and with it the FA Cup. *The great traditions that have* gone on since before any of us were born are revisited on Sunday at Fratton Park, where Portsmouth, Cup winners in 1939, take on Chelsea, the team that would bless the Cup Final this year with all the grace and *skills* that you could imagine.

Portsmouth could beat Chelsea, no doubt about that. Chelsea are so gifted that they can outwit Manchester United, Liverpool, any team in the land; and Chelsea are so profligate of those talents that an honest team such as Pompey could take them in half a game.

Intriguing, and the pity is that Fratton Park, on its last legs, is reduced to 15,500 capacity — less than a third of the 51,385 who cheered Portsmouth to the echo against Derby County in the sixth round of this competition just after the Second World War.

At Portsmouth you can feel the gravity of the game's history; you can sense a club fallen on hard times, grappling for a home, for a place in the future and yet, with ruthless intent, aiming to put an end to the fresh dream of Gianfranco Zola and his imported pals.

Who is plotting Chelsea's downfall? Why, Terry Venables. *He is* using Portsmouth, the club he has purchased for one pound, to resuscitate both the compulsion that *he* can *own and run a leading football* club and the belief that Portsmouth *can survive this season* and survive the drastic decline that, in the modern financial age, will one day destroy the *structure of League football* as we have known it in England.

Venables is not the manager at Portsmouth, indeed Terry Fenwick, the former England and Tottenham Hotspur defender, is. "As far as I am concerned, Terry Venables is the best coach in the world," he said.

And Fenwick celebrated his award as the first division's manager of the month yesterday by dipping his toe into some mild controversy. "The fact that he isn't the England manager is the biggest ricket the FA has dropped since the 1966 World Cup finals. Terry did a great job with England last summer and spent two years assembling a great squad of players. He lifted the whole nation with what he achieved at Euro 96 — and then left. It seems crazy. With all due respect to Glenn Hoddle, he is not in Terry's league. England's loss is Portsmouth's gain."

Of course, it changed the history not only of Portsmouth but of Chelsea. For Hoddle, having directed the London club halfway *towards its present standing*, handed over to Ruud Gullit and the Dutchman, in his first season, has broadened the *visions, the* ambitions and the allure of Chelsea in a manner not seen for two decades.

All of that will *not be lost on* Portsmouth. They have aspirations of their own. Alan Knight, the goalkeeper who came south from Balham at 16 and dropped anchor at Portsmouth, plays his 738th game for Pompey. An England youth and Under-21 international, a player dropped at the start of this season, a single-club loyalist, Knight thinks back to 1992 when Portsmouth lost an FA Cup semi-final against Liverpool.

"After the defeat on penalties, I looked around the *dressing-room,*" he said. Darren Anderton and Kit Symons were really upset at missing out on the final. I *thought, at least they will get* another crack at success in their careers; I had missed my last chance ... but now it's *come again.*"

The only other players in that Portsmouth side who face Chelsea tomorrow are the sweeper, Andy Awford, and Alan McLoughlin, the Ireland international whose goal against Nottingham Forest *put* Portsmouth into that semi-final.

Their new team-mates include Lee Bradbury, the striker bought out of the Army for £400 so that he can travel to Portsmouth by catamaran from Cowes, and Russell Perrett, a defender who was fitting double-glazing a year and a half ago.

These read like tales of non-League football and, unless Portsmouth achieve further success in the Cup or promotion to the Premiership, they could be common stories at whatever ground Portsmouth find if they leave Fratton Park.

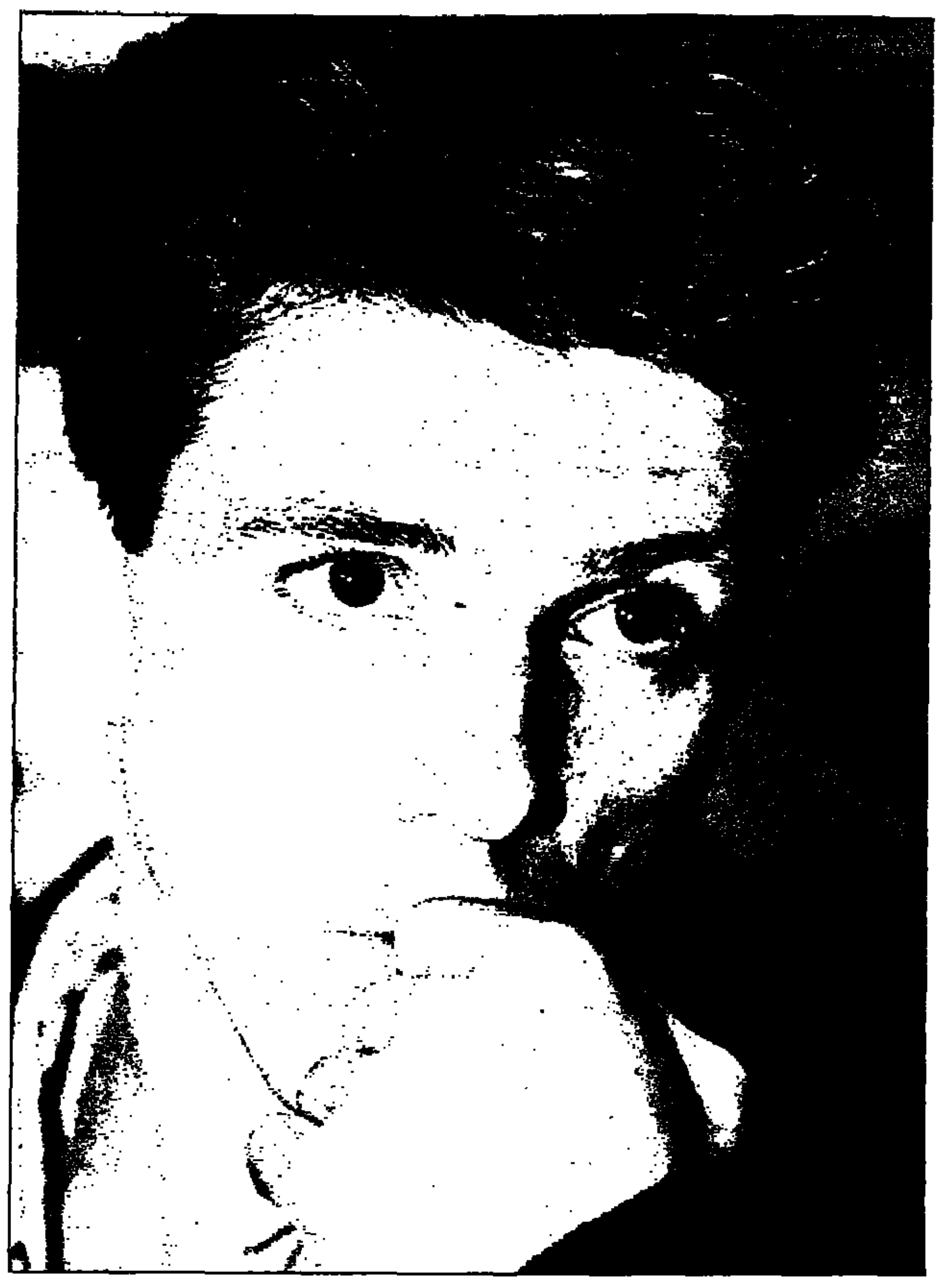
Purchased for under £5,000 nearly a century ago, the future of the ground is now in doubt. It all makes Venables's £1 gamble seem not only remote but also whimsical. *And still* they could beat Chelsea.

Brazilian settles on Tees and sympathy

JUNINHO

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL

By David Maddock



Juninho believes that struggling Middlesbrough are too good to go down

In the charmingly named village of Ingleby Barwick, between Middlesbrough and Darlington, lives the player who wears the most famous football jersey in the world. For the past three seasons, Oswaldo Giroldo Junior, or Juninho, has worn the No 10 *shirt of Brazil*, acquitting himself honourably in the jersey made legend by Pelé. He sports the same number *for Middlesbrough*, a shirt made famous by Alan Foggon and John Hickton.

There is the money, *enough even to make* a struggle at the foot of the FA Carling Premiership seem attractive, but sitting in the comfortable if anonymous house that the club bought for him, Juninho conveys too much honesty, too much fresh-faced warmth, to be painted merely as another mercenary. Ravanelli and Emerson may not care unduly for Middlesbrough, but Juninho clearly does.

"The image of some foreigners in England has not been portrayed well and it hasn't helped, but I can honestly say that I have never had a problem with living here," he said. "Of course, in the beginning it was difficult, but I brought my family here, my mother, father and sister, and it is much easier for me. The people here have always been kind to me and that has made me happy."

Sitting in his mock Victorian *living* room, with the mock coal fire burning gently, it is clear that Juninho has settled into an English cul*ture that he describes as* "very different" from home. It is clear, too, that he is content. Yet the question remains. Why Middlesbrough? If England, why not Manchester United or Liverpool, Newcastle United or Chelsea?

Juninho is diplomatic and cautious, perhaps because of the much publicised outbursts from his less sensitive team-mates. He says that he has no problems with the comments attributed to *Ravanelli, Middlesbrough's* Italian forward, about the club and his team-mates, but insisted: "I'm here because I *believe in Middlesbrough*, and I believe in Bryan Robson. It is easy to win big honours with teams like Milan or Manchester [United], but to do it with Middlesbrough is a far bigger challenge. I still think we can meet that challenge."

Juninho arrived from São Paulo in November 1995 for £4.75 million. With mesmeric skills and a vision that English players invariably lack, his reputation was enhanced by a wonderful display for *his country against England* the previous summer. Two seasons on, he is too frequently a peripheral figure as the *club sits at the foot of the* Premiership. Yet Juninho's argument carries weight, because in the next five days he will play two games that could transform a bitterly frustrating season into a highly successful one.

Today, against Derby County at the Baseball Ground, Middlesbrough contest a place in the semi-finals of the FA Cup. On Wednesday, they take a 2-0 lead into the second leg of a Coca-Cola Cup semi-final with Stockport County.

He would like to stay with Middlesbrough, that much is clear, but more than anything *he wants to wear that* Brazil No 10 shirt in the World Cup finals next year. To do so, he knows he must be playing in a successful team, and that is where the FA Cup comes in.

"I travelled to Brazil last week to play for my country," he said, "and the coach, Zagallo, ribbed me about Middlesbrough's position. He said it as a joke, but in fact he meant it as a very serious point.

"Of course he's concerned, and so am I. It would be very difficult for me to play in the first division and for Brazil. I explained to him that we are a very good team, and we are doing very well in the cups. When I came to Europe it was important to do well in the league, but also to play in European competitions. If we win one of the cups, and I think we will, then I will be fulfilling that ambition and Zagallo will be happy."

*Juninho argues passion*ately that things are finally beginning to take shape at the Riverside Stadium. "With so many foreign players, so many different languages, it was hard at the start of the season," he said. "Now we are beginning to play well, and we can escape relegation. We are too good to be in this position."

The FA Cup, he said, is "almost an obsession in England, and I like that. I like the passion there is here for the football and I enjoy the style of play. We have to go to Derby after beating them well *just a few days ago*, but I know it will be a very different game this time. But even though we are *in a more* comfortable situation in the Coca-Cola Cup, I think we can win them both."

His optimism is refreshing, especially for those Middlesbrough supporters who have despaired of the criticism that their club has been forced to endure, both from outsiders and the very footballers that they were hoping would improve their image.

"I am a fan, I will support this club even when I leave," Juninho said. He would dearly like to continue playing in Europe, but does not *know* yet if it will be in England because, as Brazil's No 10, he is not without ambition. To Juninho, that ambition does not exclude more humble demands.

Albania forced to play away by Fifa

By Russell Kempson

FIFA, football's world governing body, has ordered Albania to play their next two home *matches in the World Cup* qualifying series in Granada, Spain.

The fixtures against Ukraine on March 29 and Germany on April 4 were due to have been played in Tirana, the Albanian capital, but the decision to switch them was taken because of the political unrest in the Balkan country.

The Spanish football federation offered Granada's Los Carmenes stadium, which has a capacity of 15,400. However, it has not yet been decided whether Albania will have to use the same venue when they play Northern Ireland in group nine on September 10.

Castrol UK is to end its six-year sponsorship agreement with Swindon Town, the Nationwide League first division club, at the end of this season. The oil firm will continue to support the club in a more minor financial role.

Martin Stevens, the Swin*don marketing manager, said:* "All good things come to an end and both of us feel we have developed the partner*ship as far as it can go.*"

Terry Venables, the Australia coach, has agreed to free Mark Schwarzer, the Middlesbrough goalkeeper, from *international duty to play for* his club in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-final second leg against Stockport County at the Riverside Stadium on Wednesday. Schwarzer was due to join the Australia squad for a match against Macedonia on the same night.

"Mark is keen to establish himself as our No 1 goalkeeper," Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough player-manager, said. "With a Wembley place at stake, it is an important game for the club. Australia have eight games from now until July, and this is the only clash." Middlesbrough lead 2-0 from the first leg.

Gareth Farrelly, 21, the Aston Villa midfield player, has rejected a new 3½-year contract. The Ireland international, whose present contract expires *in the summer*, is frustrated by his lack of first-team opportunities.

Martin Bodenham, 47, of *East* Looe, Cornwall, who is one of England's most experienced officials, has been chosen to referee the Coca-Cola Cup final at Wembley on Sunday, April 6.

Hughes earns interest on advance

Russell Kempson on a forward-thinking youngster charging his cup to Wembley

Bryan Hughes. The mere name, not to mention his goalscoring skills from the Wrexham midfield, *produced a glint in the eyes of* Bobby Gould, the Wales manager, and Mick McCarthy, his Ireland counterpart. There *must be a trace of Welsh or* Irish ancestry — a Dafyd or Seamus Hughes lurking among the grandparents — surely? Gould and McCarthy made discreet inquiries.

Their search proved fruitless. Hughes is pure Anglo-Saxon — born in Liverpool, only five minutes from Goodison Park, with not a trace of a Celtic bloodline. "I'm English through and through," he said, in a rich Scouse accent. "And I'd love to play for England one day — of course, I would."

Hughes, 20, has already taken the first tentative steps on the road to international recognition. He was one of *only two second division players* selected for the Nationwide League Under-21 squad that drew 1-1 with *Serie B* under-*21s in Genoa last month. Calm* and confident, consistently creative, he did not look out of place amid the young bucks from Torino, Palermo and Foggia.

His education takes another unexpected curve tomorrow, when Wrexham play Chesterfield in the unlikeliest of FA Cup quarter-finals. If he is excited, he keeps it well hidden: the prospect of a place in the last four produces no more than a tingle of anticipation. Little fazes him.

"I remember listening to the draw on the radio, driving along in the car, and I was a bit disappointed when we came out with Chesterfield," he said. "I was hoping for one of the bigger clubs, a Premiership club. Something to test ourselves against.

"Then I thought: 'Hang on. It means a second division side is going to reach the semi-finals. That's got to be good for the league. One of us is going *to be one game away from* playing at Wembley.' Just imagine it: Wrexham playing at Wembley. You can dream, *can't you. It's phenomenal.*"

Hughes's only visit to Wembley was in 1986, as a ten-year-old, when his beloved Everton were beaten 3-1 by Liverpool in the FA Cup Final. It was not a fun day out for the Evertonian family. "I was a bit young. I don't remember too much about it," Hughes said. "I don't think we were very happy, though."

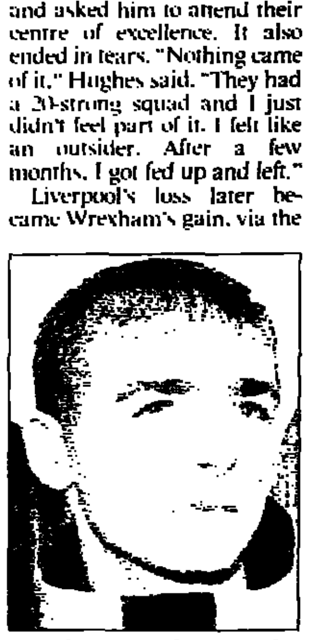
Four years later Liverpool spotted him playing for Archbishop Beck School in Walton and asked him to attend their centre of excellence. It also ended in tears. "Nothing came of it," Hughes said. "They had a 20-strong squad and I just didn't feel part of it. I felt like an outsider. After a few months, I got fed up and left."

Liverpool's loss later became Wrexham's gain, via the *Eastern Sunday League with* Bromborough — "across the water" in Birkenhead. "It was a good league, there were *always lots of scouts watching,*" Hughes said. "Sure, it would have been nice if Everton had come in for me, it would've been great, but once I'd signed for Wrexham, that was it. That's where my heart is now."

Hughes still lives near Goodison with his family. The daily 45-minute trip to Wrexham is comfortable and his contract does not expire until the end of next season. "I've got ambition, like everyone, and I feel I've got the ability to get on," he said. "You hear rumours now and then, about so-and-so being interested, but I'm quite content here until something happens."

Wrexham have eliminated Colwyn Bay, Scunthorpe United, West Ham United, Peterborough United and Bir*mingham City in an* exhilarating eight-match series, with Hughes contributing six goals.

Though he makes no predictions for Chesterfield, family and friends are already convinced. "They think we're going to get there, get to Wembley," he said. "They're making plans, talking about booking Cup Final tickets and everything. It's amazing, isn't it?"



Hughes: Wrexham's gain

Fowler carrying Liverpool hopes

By David Miller

ONLY the gifted touch of Robbie Fowler, exhibited when scoring one of the finest goals of the season so far, against SK Brann on Thursday, offers Liverpool much hope of closing the gap in their pursuit of Manchester United. And that touch has recently been missing in the FA Carling Premiership.

Just when Liverpool needed to be turning the screw on the leaders, they have faltered, and the position could worsen over the weekend, with United likely to increase their goal tally at the expense of Sunderland before Liverpool enter a difficult home game against *Newcastle United. By the time* Liverpool play Brann in the home leg of the Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final, they may *effectively be out of the hunt* for championship honours.

Fowler's goal, scored after only nine minutes in Bergen, was simultaneously instinctive and brilliant. Taking a high diagonal pass wide on the left, he flicked the ball over his and his marker's head with his right heel, spun past the defender to take the dropping ball in his stride, and hit an early left-foot drive beneath an unprepared goalkeeper.

It was a moment of dexterity performed at a faster pace than Paul Gascoigne's memorable goal against Scotland in the European championship last summer.

Fowler was unfortunate not to give Liverpool a first-leg lead. After Geir Hasund had equalised two minutes into the second half, Fowler beat the goalkeeper with a floating drive that clipped the top of the crossbar, and subsequently might have been awarded a penalty by the Russian referee when the goalkeeper pulled him off the ball.

Yet although Barnes and, some of the time, Redknapp played a fine possession game, Liverpool have long-term problems. Two defenders, Wright and Ruddock, are too old for comfort; Barnes, always moving at his own pace, *yet covering the whole field*, cannot remain evergreen indefinitely; and a replacement has to be signed for *Collymore, who was left on the* bench. Collymore admitted yesterday: "I am the club's odd man out." Roy Evans, Liverpool's manager, said he was not interested in, Tore Andre Flo, the supposedly coveted Norwegian striker.

Assuming *they make sure of* their semi-final place, Liverpool will be hoping to avoid Barcelona, who swept to a 3-1 first-leg lead against AIK Solna. *The* other two fancied teams, Benfica and Paris Saint-Germain, fared poorly. Benfica were beaten 2-0 at home by Fiorentina and Paris held to a goalless draw at home by AEK Athens.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Leopards 93 Worthing 83.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Charlotte 122 Boston 121 (OT); Washington 99 Miami 95; Atlanta 117 Philadelphia 104; New Jersey 102 Vancouver 96; Orlando 94 LA Clippers 93.

BIATHLON

NOZAWA ONSEN, Japan: World Cup: Men (20km): 1, M Kirchner (Ger) 58min 21.6sec (0 pens); 2, V Hietalahti (Fin) 1hr 00min 35.1sec (1); 3, O Ryenkov (Bel) 1:00:47.3 (0); 4, R Gross (Ger) 1:01:45.2 (3); 5, V Maigurov (Russ) 1:01:53.3 (3); 6, A Kobelev (Russ) 1:02:00.0 (1). World Cup *positions:* 1, E E Bjorndalen (Nor) 277pts; 2, Maigurov 261; 3, S Fischer (Ger) 254; 4, P Muslimov (Russ) 225; 5, Ryenkov 216; 6, Gross 210. Women (15km): 1, A Grasic (Slovakia) 46:45.2 (2); 2, U Disl (Ger) 47:42.2 (3); 3, A Stera (Pol) 47:48.9 (1); 4, M Forsberg (Swe) 47:58.3 (3); 5, A Mallat (Fin) 48:26.2 (0); 6, N Talanova (Russ) 48.41.3 (2). World Cup positions: 1, Forsberg 293; 2, Disl 259; 3, S Greiner-Petter-Memm (Ger) 240; 4, G M Andreassen (Nor) 219; 5, C Niogret (Fr) 216; 6, A Skveland (Nor) 211.

BILLIARDS

NORWICH: Strachan world matchplay championship: Fourth round: (England unless stated): *R Chapman bt S Multani* (India) 4-2; N Patel (India) bt R Close 4-0; R Foldvari (Aus) bt C Everton (Wales) 4-2; S Agrawal (India) bt A Shandilya (India) 4-1; C Shutt bt D Joshi (India) 4-2; I Williamson bt M Ferreira (India) 4-3; G Sethi (India) bt S Naisby 4-2; *P Gilchrist bt B Bhaskar (India)* 4-1.

BOWLS

YORK: EWIBA national championships: Unbadged pairs: *Quarter-finals: J Arnaud* and E Dibble (Atherley) bt L Metcalfe and D Freddi (Richardson's) 22-21; A Burgess and C Cloke (Northavon) bt D Gibbons and C Clarke (Mansfield, North London) 20-18; C *and* A Gowshall (Louth) bt P Pond and S Sullivan (Whiteknights) *22-13; A Knott and S* Wilson (South Shields) bt Christina and Cheryl Northall (Teignbridge) 22-9. Semi-finals: Burgess and Cloke bt Arnaud and Dibble 25-11; Knott and Wilson bt Gowshall *and Gowshall 22-20.*

CRICKET

TOUR MATCH: East London (first day of three): Border 117 (J N Gillespie 7-34). Australians 206-5 *(M E Waugh 62)*
SHEFFIELD SHIELD (first day of four): *Adelaide:* South Australia 218; Victoria 72-1. Perth: New South Wales 89 (B Mulder 5-2); Western Australia 211-7 (A C Gilchrist *85 not out*, R J Campbell 64, B P Julian 51; G R J Matthews 4-56). Hobart: Tasmania 305-6 (R T Ponting 159, S Young 92) v Queensland
SUPERSPORT SERIES (first day of four): Cape Town: Western Province 269-2 (J H Kallis *90 not out*, D L Haynes 83) v Natal. Bloemfontein: Free State 178 (A Badenhorst 4-39); Eastern Province 131-5 (L J Koen 57, K C Wessels 50 *not out*). Centurion: Northern Transvaal v Transvaal — no play, rain

FOOTBALL

EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' CUP: Quarter-finals, first leg: Barcelona 3 AIK Solna 1. Benfica 0 Fiorentina 2; Paris Saint-Germain 0 AEK Athens 0; SK Brann 1 *Liverpool 1*
TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP: Fifth round: Celtic 2 Rangers 0
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division Nottingham Forest 1 Everton 0. First *division: West Bromwich* 0 Port Vale 0
COCA-COLA INTERNATIONAL: Under-16 challenge match: Scotland 5 England 1
FA YOUTH CUP: Fourth-round replay: Watford 3 Manchester United 2
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Unifilla first division *Cup: Third-round replay.* Netherfield 0 Ashton Utd 3
BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Cup. Second round: Wednesfield 3 Tividale 1
UK LIVING WOMEN'S FA CUP: Sixth round replay: Ilkeston 2 Arsenal 4
SCHOOLS MATCHES: *North-West Alder* Cup: Second round: Bolton 1 Bury 3. Midland Federation Cup: Warwickshire 2 Northamptonshire 2. Premier League Trophy: Under-19: Quarter-final: Hampshire 3 Surrey 2. Under-16: Quarter-final: Sussex 0 Oxfordshire 1. *English Snickers Under-19* Trophy: Quarter-final: Brookfield Community 1 Wyke Coll 3. English Goodyear under-16 Trophy: Quarter-final: Bedminster Down 2 St Joseph's Coll 3. English *Knowles Cup: Buckinghamshire* 0 *Sussex* 1. Other match: King's, Canterbury 3 Sevenoaks 2.
SPANISH LEAGUE: Sporting de Gijon 2 Betis 4
LIBERTADORES CUP: Colo Colo (Chile) 1 Minerven (Ven) 0 *(in Santiago)*

GOLF

AGADIR: Moroccan Open: Leading first-round scores (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): 67: S Allan (Aus). 68: A Cotton, B May (US), C Whitelaw (SA). 69: J-C Pinero (Sp), P Harrington, J Haeggman (Swe), D Hospital (Sp), A Lebouc (Fr), D A Russell, C Rocca (It), W Westner (SA). 70: J Payne, N Fasth (Swe), B Davis, R Karlsson (Swe), P Broadhurst. 71: A Forsbrand (Swe), A Johnstone (Zim), [illegible] (Sp), G Orr, R Burns, V Phillips, J Coceres (Arg), M James, A Hunter, C Hainline (US). 72: P U Johansson (Swe), [illegible] (Arg), [illegible] (Japan), P Price, D Tapping, W Riley (Aus), M Tunnicliff, [illegible] (Aus), M Roe. 73: R Wessels (SA), M A Martin (Sp), P O'Malley (Aus), E Canonica (It), [illegible], S Scahill (NZ), F Lindgren (Swe), B Tinning (Den), A Beal, [illegible], F Valera (Sp), W Bennett, [illegible], [illegible] (It), D Borrego (Sp), [illegible], J Robson, [illegible] Hawkes (SA), R Drummond.
MIAMI: PGA Doral Open: Leading first round scores [illegible] 65: [illegible] 66: G Norman (Aus), R Tway, L Roberts. 67: [illegible] (GB), S Cink, J Haas, D Martin, R Black. 68: D Duval, N Price (Zim), M Lawson, T Tolles, B Andrade. 69: C Montgomerie (GB). 70: F Allem (SA), J Ozaki (Japan), C Parry (Aus), S Elkington (Aus). 71: W Grady (Aus), N Faldo (GB).

HOCKEY

KUALA LUMPUR: World Cup qualifying *tournament: Group A:* [illegible] 4. Group B: Argentina 2 Belgium 1; Argentina 9 Ireland 1; South Korea 7 New Zealand 1; Belarus 5 Belgium 7.
PORTSMOUTH: Representative match: Royal Navy 4 Hawks 4.
MILTON KEYNES: British Aerospace under-18 schoolgirls championship: Newlands (Berks) 1 Bromsgrove 2; [illegible] 0 Cheltenham LC 2; Bromsgrove 2 [illegible] Coburn (Upminster) 0; [illegible] Newlands 0 Coburn 2; [illegible] Cheltenham 0 Bromsgrove 3; Newlands 2 Coburn 0; Bromsgrove 6 [illegible] 0; Coburn 1 Cheltenham 1; [illegible] 0 Newlands 4. Final positions: 1, Bromsgrove; 2, Cheltenham; 3, Newlands.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): NY Islanders 5 [illegible] Phoenix 5 Tampa Bay 0; Washington 6 Colorado 3; NY Rangers 6 Los Angeles [illegible]; San Jose 2 Ottawa 0.

ROWING

OXFORD University Torpids: Men: First division: [illegible] bpd St Edmund Hall. Second division: [illegible] bpd Wadham. [illegible] bpd Balliol. [illegible] and [illegible] bpd Lady Margaret Hall. [illegible]. Third division: St [illegible] bpd [illegible]; Corpus Christi bpd [illegible]; Balliol II and Keble II bpd New College II; University II bpd Balliol II. Fourth division: Lincoln II bpd St Edmund Hall II. [illegible] bpd Lady Margaret Hall II; St [illegible] II and Wadham II bpd Worcester II; [illegible] II bpd St [illegible] II. Fifth division: St [illegible] II and St Catherine's II; Jesus II bpd St [illegible] II; Hertford II bpd Oriel IV; [illegible] III; Regent's Park and Wolfson III [illegible] II; Merton II bpd Regent's Park. Sixth division: Wolfson III bpd Magdalen III; [illegible] II bpd Keble III; Balliol III bpd Corpus Christi II; Trinity II bpd Lady Margaret Hall III; Somerville II bpd Trinity II; [illegible] III bpd Oriel V. Seventh division: [illegible] III and Wadham III bpd University [illegible]; [illegible] II bpd Pembroke III. Women: First division: St Hilda's and Lady Margaret Hall bpd Somerville; University bpd St Hugh's; Trinity bpd Pembroke; Lincoln bpd Christ Church. Second division: Wolfson bpd [illegible]; Merton bpd Hertford; St Edmund Hall bpd Worcester; Keble bpd [illegible]. Third division: Magdalen bpd [illegible]; Wadham II; Corpus Christi and Wolfson II bpd [illegible] II; St Catherine's II bpd Lady Margaret Hall II. Fourth division: [illegible] bpd Magdalen II; Merton II, Hertford II, St Antony's and Wolfson III bpd Pembroke II; St Edmund Hall II bpd Lincoln II

RUGBY LEAGUE

AUSTRALIAN SUPER LEAGUE: Perth 22 North Queensland 20.
AUSTRALIAN LEAGUE (ARL): Parramatta 10 North Sydney 8

RUGBY UNION

Super 12 tournament

Canterbury 19 Wellington 17
Canterbury Crusaders: Try: Kerr. Con: Lilley. Pens: Lilley 4. **Wellington Hurricanes:** Tries: Ieremia, Preston. Cons: Preston 2. Pen: Preston
(at Christchurch)

Free State 15 Auckland 24
Free State: Pens: De Beer 5. **Auckland Blues:** Tries: Vidiri, Tonu'u. Con: Cashmore. Pens: Cashmore 4
(at Bloemfontein)

TENNIS

ROTTERDAM: Men's tournament: Second round: A Radulescu (Ger) bt M Sinner (Ger) 3-6, 7-6, 6-4; D Vacek (Cz) bt D van *Scheppingen (Holl)* 7-6, 4-6, 6-1; M Stich (Ger) bt T Carbonell (Sp) 7-6, 6-4; G Ivanisevic (Cro) bt G Raoux (Fr) 7-5, 6-7, 6-3; R Krajicek (Holl) bt D Prinosil (Ger) 7-6, 7-6; T Enqvist (Swe) bt N Kiefer (Ger) 6-2, 6-2. Quarter-finals: Vacek bt R Furlan (It) 6-4, 1-6, 6-3; Enqvist bt Radulescu 7-6, 6-3; Ivanisevic wo P Korda (Cz); Krajicek bt Stich 7-6, 7-6
SCOTTSDALE, Arizona: Men's tournament: Second round: C Woodruff (US) bt J Sanchez (Sp) 4-6, 6-3, 7-6

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
AUSTRIA								
Kitzbühel	0	80	fair	heavy	worn	fine	0	6/3
(Cooler, so pistes firmer; decent snow available)								
St Anton	35	260	soft	varied	art	sun	10	6/3
(Good spring skiing; slushy or worn low down)								
FRANCE								
Flaine	80	220	fair	crust	fair	sun	-2	27/2
(Hard or icy first thing, slush later; spring skiing)								
Meribel	40	155	good	varied	slush	sun	7	27/2
(Good skiing at altitude but bare or slushy below 1,800m)								
Val d'Isère	90	200	good	varied	icy	sun	2	6/3
(Good skiing but snow hard or icy first thing)								
ITALY								
Cortina	15	90	good	varied	closed	sun	5	6/3
(Open pistes well groomed and in fine shape)								
SWITZERLAND								
Verbier	30	190	fair	spring	slush	sun	-1	27/2
(High runs good; great spring snow available)								
Wengen	5	90	good	varied	slushy	fine	6	6/3
(15cm new snow giving good spring skiing generally)								
Zermatt	20	220	good	crust	worn	sun	10	27/2
(Very warm with slush on south slopes)								

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper, art - artificial.

RACING 42

Cheltenham Man gets into mood for Festival

SPORT

ATHLETICS 44

British hopes take early tumble at world championships

SATURDAY MARCH 8 1997

Champion trails as German drivers dominate practice for Australian Grand Prix

Hill has to watch the world go by

FROM OLIVER HOLT
IN MELBOURNE

DAMON HILL has seen the writing on the wall every day since the end of last season and yesterday, as the impossibility of defending his hard-won world championship was rammed home, he saw pictures on a giant screen, too. Images of the best car in Formula One stared down at him from above Albert Park and gave him the closest view he is likely to get all season of a Williams-Renault.

Hill, a giant No 1 emblazoned on his T-shirt and on the front of his Arrows-Yamaha, had to survive a gearbox failure and a spin as he struggled his way to the thirteenth quickest time in the opening two practice sessions for the Australian Grand Prix tomorrow, sandwiched between the Prost Mugen-Honda of Olivier Panis and the Tyrrell Ford of Mika Salo.

The most enduring memory of the day was of his car being driven slowly to the pits on the back of a breakdown truck. When it arrived at the Arrows garage, it was winched slowly down to the floor, a mechanic sitting astride its nose, a sad symbol of Hill's fall from the Formula One summit.

His car seat, lost in transit in Singapore, had not turned up either, so he had to use a temporary one. "If anyone sees it," he said afterwards with a smile, "will they let me know."

Ahead of him — more than 2½ seconds a lap ahead of him, in fact — Michael Schumacher, who has been the soul of pessimism about his own title chances this season, put Hill's fall into sobering perspective when he fended off the challenges of the Williams drivers, Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Jacques Villeneuve, to finish at the top of the times in his Ferrari.

Later in the afternoon, though, in the heat of the Ferrari garage, Jean Todt, the Ferrari sporting director, said that although he was encouraged by Schumacher's performance, although it proved the new car was not "a disaster", as some had thought, he still expected Williams to be the team to beat in the race tomorrow. "They look very, very strong," he said.

With Hill out of the championship equation, the new order in Formula One took on a decidedly Germanic feel, with the Schumacher brothers, Michael and Ralf, and Frentzen in the top five places. Eddie Irvine, Michael Schumacher's Ferrari team-mate, was the leading Briton, in sixth position.

Deciphering practice times, when different drivers run unknown fuel loads and experiment with different set-ups, is as problematic as cracking a complex code, but there was no disguising the Williams comfort and their potential to improve. Their performance prompted Hill, as honest and reflective as ever, to allow his thoughts to wander off in search of things past.

"I seemed to be out on my own on the circuit for long periods of both sessions," Hill said, "so I fantasised I was at the front again. I saw a picture of a Williams on the big screen and I thought it was me. But it wasn't. It seemed strange for a moment.

"Despite the problems we had, I think the day was a success. I am very pleased to be only 2½ seconds off the pace and, if we can keep the same margin in qualifying, that would be a good result for us. There is still a hell of a lot to do, though, so there is no point in getting carried away.

"Whatever happens this season, I will see it through. There is no question about that. I do not walk away from the responsibilities that have been placed on me. It might have been difficult for Nigel Mansell to cope with not running at the front, but he had been racing a lot longer than me and I still have plenty of enthusiasm. I am ready for a tough year.

"Credibility is given for different reasons in Formula One. The next stage for me in proving I am a great driver is to show I can do it in a car other than a Williams. At Arrows, I can do it by getting a better performance from the car than the experts consider possible."

Schumacher insisted after the afternoon session that setting the quickest time was a "meaningless prize", but he admitted that the car, the final Ferrari creation of the designer, John Barnard, who has been replaced by Rory Byrne, performed better than he had expected.

He has maintained throughout the winter that Ferrari would not be truly competitive until later in the season, so the preliminary indications yesterday suggest that there may be a closer fight between him and the Williams drivers than he has so far cared to predict.

Frentzen, whose fastest lap was 0.4sec slower than Schumacher's, revelled in his elevated position, but returned Todt's compliment by saying how "very, very competitive", Ferrari were going to be. Villeneuve, the championship favourite, gave every sign that he had not been wringing all he could have done from his Williams. "The last lap time was going to be pretty quick before I got held up by traffic," Villeneuve said, "but I don't know how quick. Most of the work we did today was just comparing two types of tyres, but in general we were pretty quick and I have to say that I am confident."

If Hill's lowly position had been widely predicted, the biggest disappointment of the day was the performance of McLaren-Mercedes. Mika Hakkinen set the tone for their day early in the morning session when he failed to see Irvine's Ferrari and collided with him before succumbing to a separate suspension problem. Hakkinen finished the day in tenth position, two places below his team-mate, David Coulthard. "We are a long way from the performance we achieved in testing," Ron Dennis, the McLaren managing director, said.

Further down the grid, the first outing of the new Stewart-Fords was also something of an anticlimax after such a feast of expectation and publicity. Inevitable first-day glitches limited the running of their drivers, Jan Magnussen and Rubens Barrichello, to a combined total of 20 laps and left them in eighteenth and 21st place respectively.

The debut of the Lola team, though, offered far less hope for the future. Their drivers, Vincenzo Sospiri and Ricardo Rosset, finished so far adrift of the leading times that it is unlikely they will make it onto the starting grid if the margin remains the same in qualifying today.

Hill sees a long, hard road ahead as he prepares to embark on the defence of his drivers' title in Melbourne. He was thirteenth in practice yesterday, 2½ seconds behind Schumacher, who was fastest

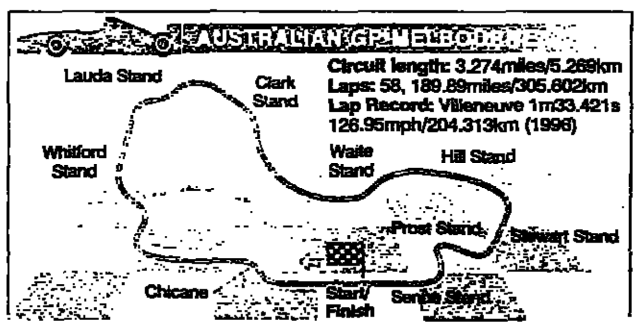
TELEVISION

QUALIFYING: ITV: Today: 1 10-2 40pm

RACE: ITV: Tomorrow: 2 10-5.10am (live, repeated 2 0-4.40pm) Highlights: 11 10pm-12.10am

MELBOURNE PRACTICE TIMES

1, M Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1min 32 496sec. 2, H-H Frentzen (Ger, Williams-Renault) 1:32 910; 3, J Alesi (Fr, Benetton-Renault) 1.32.255; 4, J Villeneuve (Can, Williams-Renault) 1 33 371. 5, R Schumacher (Ger, Jordan-Peugeot) 1 33.437. 6, E Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1.34.157. 7, G Berger, (Austria, Benetton-Renault) 1:34 271, 8, D Coulthard (GB, McLaren-Mercedes) 1:34.432, 9, J Herbert (GB, Sauber) 1 34.593, 10, M Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren-Mercedes) 1.34.742; 11, G Fisichella (It, Jordan-Peugeot) 1:34 777, 12, O Panis (Fr, Prost-Mugen Honda) 1.34 927; 13, D Hill (GB, Arrows-Yamaha) 1:35 073; 14, M Salo (Fin, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:36 142; 15, N Lanni (It, Sauber) 1.36.223, 16, J Trulli (It, Minardi-Hart) 1:36 392; 17, J Verstappen (Holl, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:36.716; 18, J Magnussen (Den, Stewart Ford) 1:37 023; 19, P Diniz (Br, Arrows-Yamaha) 1:38 092, 20, S Nakano (Japan, Prost-Mugen Honda) 1.39.652; 21, R Barrichello (Br, Stewart Ford) 1 40 002; 22, U Katayama (Japan, Minardi-Hart) 1:40.947; 23, R Rosset (Br, Lola Ford) 1 41 166, 24, V Sospiri (It, Lola Ford) 1:42.590.



Circuit length: 3.274miles/5.269km
Laps: 58, 189.89miles/305.602km
Lap Record: Villeneuve 1m33.421s 126.95mph/204.313km (1996)

Chesterfield charged over mass brawl

CHESTERFIELD'S preparations for their FA Cup quarter-final against Wrexham tomorrow were upset yesterday when, along with Plymouth Argyle, they were charged by the Football Association in connection with a mass brawl in the Nationwide League second division match between the two sides at Saltergate 14 days ago (Richard Hobson writes).

Four players were sent off — Kevin Davies and Darren Carr, of Chesterfield, and Richard Logan and Tony James, of Plymouth — after the fracas. Ronnie Maugé, of Plymouth, had been dismissed earlier.

Meanwhile, the FA fined Crystal Palace and Norwich £40,000 each, £30,000 of which was suspended until 1998, for their parts in an incident involving 21 players during their first division match last December.

However, in the case of Chesterfield and Plymouth, the fighting was more prolonged. With that in mind, the disciplinary committee may take sterner action.

Both Chesterfield and Plymouth have been given 14 days to respond to the charge and the likelihood is that both will ask for a personal hearing. John Duncan, the Chesterfield manager, was distraught after the incident because he knew immediately that Davies and Carr would be suspended for the cup-tie tomorrow, described in the town as the biggest game in the club's 131-year history.

"Before the incident, the Wrexham tie was balanced at 50-50; the loss of the two lads does not help us," Duncan said.

Taylor's recall comes at a trance

BY RICHARD HOBSON
AND PETER BALL

FA CUP

EVERY year the FA Cup generates human interest stories in abundance but few can match the return to action of Martin Taylor, the Derby County goalkeeper, in the quarter-final tie against Middlesbrough at the Baseball Ground this afternoon. After 29 months of worry, pain and toil, he makes his first appearance for the club since a double fracture of his left leg placed his career in jeopardy.

Jim Smith, the Derby manager, decided to recall Taylor after Russell Hoult conceded six goals in the FA Carling Premiership defeat by Middlesbrough three days ago. Asked whether Taylor's selection represented a gamble, Smith replied: "It would have been more of a gamble to stick with Russell."

Taylor, 30, was injured in a challenge with Dave Regis in a first division game against Southend United in October 1994. The leg healed slowly and a pin inserted during a second operation remains in place. Although hours in the gymnasium helped him to recover physical fitness, Taylor was lacking confidence before he visited Clive Wilson-Fearon, a sports psychologist and hypnotist.

"Goalkeepers do things instinctively and my problem was that I was thinking what action to take," Taylor said. "By the time I had decided, it was too late. The hypnosis was a stepping-stone on the long way back and it helps me to do things naturally again."

Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough player-manager, does not anticipate a repeat of Wednesday's scoreline. "This will be a totally different game," he said. "It was tough for an hour before we ran away with it." He is also more concerned about the club's plight at the foot of the Premiership.

"If we beat Derby, I won't be celebrating," he said. "The first thing I'll do is look at the league results."

Ruud Gullit, the player-manager of Chelsea, who play Portsmouth at Fratton Park, is still coming to terms with the English fascination for the Cup. "When I played in Italy, you wanted to win the league, because then you would qualify for the European Cup and play against all the best teams. That was always your goal.

"Here, you seem to like the Cup. I found it strange at first, but now I think I realise what it means, why it is so important to you. I can accept that."

Sheffield Wednesday and Wimbledon, the most improved sides in the Premiership, meet at Hillsborough tomorrow. If anything, David Pleat's success in turning around Wednesday is even more remarkable than Joe Kinnear's transformation of Wimbledon. He inherited little more than a declining team of crowd-pleasers. "Last year, the job was more difficult than most," Pleat said. "Some of the problems just hadn't been dealt with."

Wrexham play Chesterfield at Saltergate, in the all-second division tussle, with injury doubts about Karl Connolly and Kevin Russell, their strikers.

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Cape Town makes the Olympic running

CAPE Town yesterday overtook Rome, in the opinion of many, as emotional favourite to stage the Olympic Games of 2004 (David Miller writes). A panel of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) named a shortlist of five candidates: Athens, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Rome and Stockholm.

The regulations required a minimum of four from 11 bidding cities. So competitive was the standard, in the 20,000-word report of an evaluation commission, that a fifth was included. Eliminated were Istanbul, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, San Juan, Seville and St Petersburg. "We nearly ran out of time in the final debate, it was so heated," a member of the commission said.

Rome (1960) and Stockholm (1912) have previously staged the Games. Rome, with a billion-dollar expenditure programme for the Christian millennium, has widespread sports-orientated construction under way, but Cape Town's appeal as the first African host will prove hard to resist when the vote goes to the IOC membership on September 5.

Many argue, including critics in South Africa, that the newly-liberated country has more urgent priorities. The bid, however, has the emphatic approval of President Nelson Mandela and promises to create 90,000 jobs if accepted.

Athens, historic first host of the modern Games in 1896 and controversially bypassed for the centenary Games last year, staged by Atlanta, may find itself again sidelined in a two-headed contest between Rome and Cape Town. Buenos Aires would be South America's first Games host.

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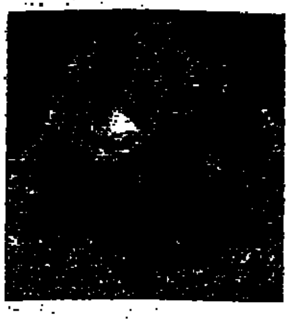

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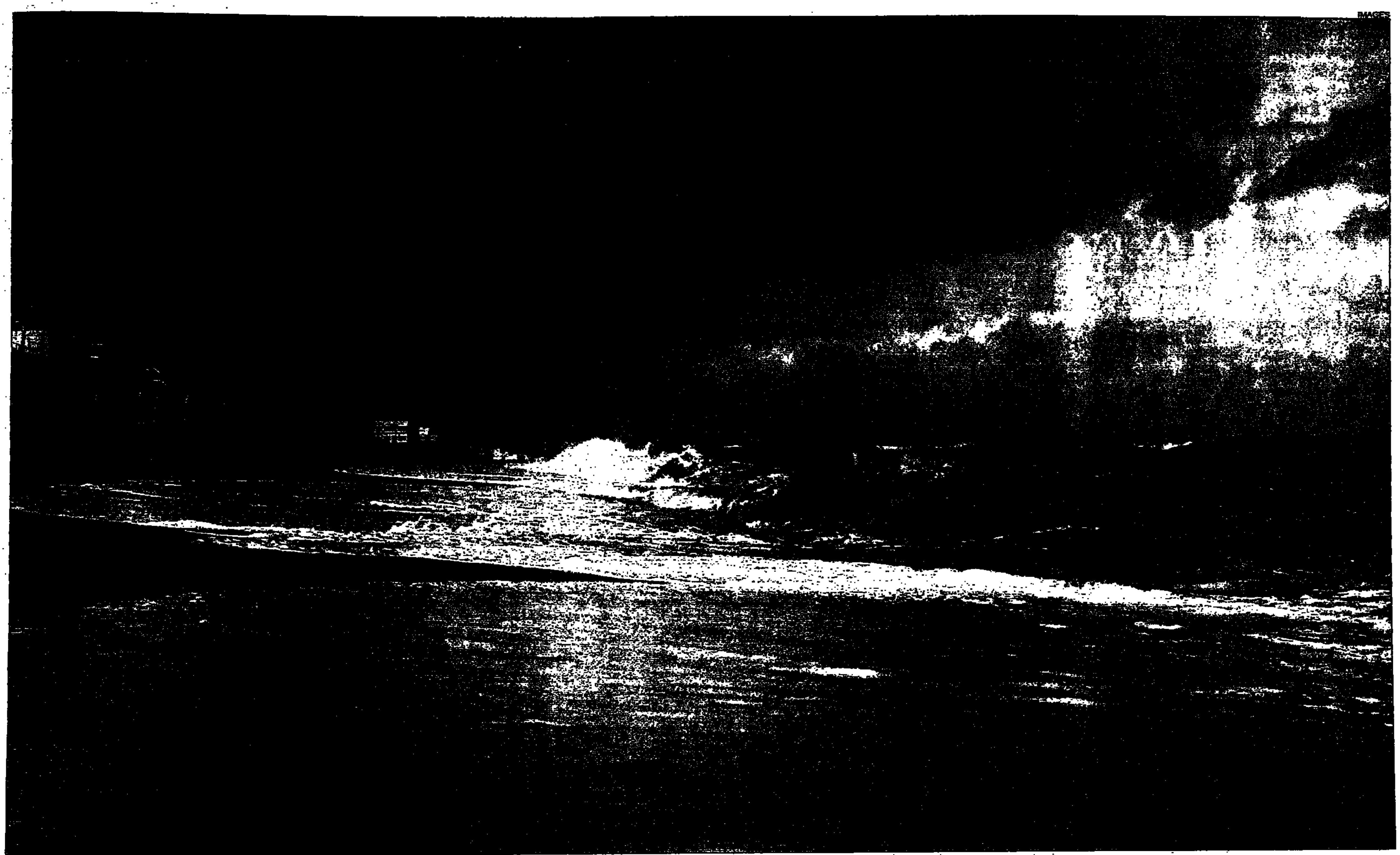

IMAGES

The changing tide

Time-for-a-change has become a mantra of the pre-election season among newspaper writers and their readers. The Editor of *The Times* went in search of what the phrase might mean. This is **Peter Stothard's** diary of the days before the campaigners opened fire

Suffolk coast: 1.1.97

This all begins with a soft explosion over some smoked salmon. As we drink to the soon-to-be-departing year, my property-developer friend has just sensed from me the possibility (only the possibility) that *The Times* (*his Times*) might back Labour in the election. The temperature on the beach outside our window is well below zero. The hail is scooping in from the sea. Warnings of more ice in the night have already reduced our New Year's dinner party to three. This news about *The Times* is yet another unwelcome forecast.

We quickly get back to Aldeburgh-talk of music, fish and lifeboats. We have only the most desultory discussion about why so many Conservatives want to give Tony Blair a chance. My friend thinks that they (and now he includes me) are all mad. As the storm-blown hail and shingle threaten to flatten the house, I raise the usual questionmarks against Tory competence, unity, corruption, leadership and fatigue — and try to sound as sane as I can.

Chelmsford, Essex: 3.1.97

Time-for-a-change will be a mantra in the coming election season. What does it mean? I am not a regular recorder of political conversations. Many years ago, as a *Sunday Times* reporter, I had a much-loved black book in which I wrote down what politicians told me; these days a comment from a reader, a friend, a political contact or a chance encounter is either an immediate topic for *The Times* or it dies. New Year resolution: for the next few months I will try to ask questions about change and record some answers.

A few friends still live here in Chelmsford where I was born. For most of them, I discover, the answer to my question is very simple. Their change has already happened. Some four years ago, around about the "Black Wednesday" humiliation of John Major's main economic and foreign policy, but not just because of it, they decided that the Prime Minister should lose his job. Among Tories in London I am always told that on polling day voters will not remember the ERM: "The letters themselves are already history, like NEDC and TSR2 . . . they mean nothing." Maybe. Here it is not so much that people remember the ERM and the uncontrolled incompetences around it; it is just that it was then, at that specific faraway time, that they addressed themselves to politics; and that then, after making their decision, they went back, like sensible folk, to dinner, golf and commuting.

Colchester, Essex: 4.1.97

Brian is a 35-year-old marketing manager for a small electronics company. (I will not give his name or any names in this diary: no one, neither the rulers nor the ruled, spoke to me on what we call "an attributable basis".) Brian is a new *Times* reader and says that he is going to vote Labour for the first time. Why? He talks of Conservative tax increases and sleaze before coming to what I think is his main point: "I've got a choice. I've never had a real choice before. Throughout my life I've been able to choose cars, supermarkets and holidays — but never politics. I could never have voted for Kinnock. But Blair is fine."

I ask if that is not a bit flip: after all, perhaps it is because of the Tories that he has had all those choices. He looks amazed.

Politicians, though schooled to expect no gratitude from voters, always want it. John Major intends "to run on my record". Meeting Britain's many Brians will not raise his spirits.

Primrose Hill, London: 6.1.97

Back home in London I find a reader's letter. My former *Sunday Times* boss, Hugo Young, has claimed to hear from us the "throat-clearing of rats making prudent preparation for their destiny". If *The Times* were to back Blair at this election, would that be a fair charge?

How should I answer? *The Times* judiciously endorsed John Major against Neil Kinnock in 1992. We enthusiastically supported Margaret Thatcher in all her election victories, except in the first when the paper was muzzled by a long trade union dispute. Before that *The Times* had settled around the line where Conservatives and Liberals met, flirting frequently with centre parties and coalitions, but supporting the Conservatives on polling days.

Are we a Tory paper? Some may think so — and not only on the Suffolk seafront. But a sense of the national interest (however inadequately sensed) has traditionally predominated over party interest at *The Times*. Editors with conservative values have long sought to be close to governing politicians and the governed people: but in the best days we have always listened to the latter the more closely.

Might we decide to abandon "a sinking ship"? My more impatient Tory friends often charge that our criticisms over the past four years have helped to push the party down. If we were ever in John Major's crew (and we were never fully signed up) we left our posts in 1992. If we formally abandon the Tories at this election it will not be because they are under water but because they have so often seemed dead in the water, barely moving, little led, unresponsive to the public instinct, not really a Conservative government at all.

Bloomsbury, London. 14.1.97

David is a history graduate who wants a job in journalism. As is prudent for those seeking career advice from *The Times*, he says that he is a *Times* reader. He would very much like to be living at a time of powerful political change "like in 1945 or 1979". But he is not sure that this is it. "Blair and Major are so much the same. I have never seen the two of them in the flesh in the same room. Have you? Is it all a trick?" He smiles like a small professor.

"For a tide of change you need big new ideas, like the Welfare State or Thatcherism. We don't have that, nothing like it." He pauses to scrabble for a piece of paper. "I voted for this government but now I hate them — and they all seem to hate each other. That's some sort of change, I suppose."

On the paper is written a mass of hostile quotes from *Times* leaders about John Major. I take my suspicions back. He *is* a *Times* reader. But when I ask him which party he thinks we will support at the general election, he does not hesitate for a moment. "Oh, Conservatives," he says.

Oxford: 17.1.97

The "hate" that David sees is all too apparent everywhere. Foolishly, I somehow still associate voting with roustabout and enjoyment. This season ought to impress us with ourselves. It ought to make us feel good. One of the questions when I was a student of Greek history here was why Athens, of all the many moderately civilised places in the 6th century Mediterranean, became the birthplace of democracy. One of the answers was that only Athens had the drunken festival of the Dionysia in which the rules and hierarchies of ordinary life were regularly turned upside down. From that beginning came "bread and circuses", "Eatanswill" and other good election times. Now the parties are something else entirely.

Knightsbridge: 22.1.97

Robert is a Somerset businessman and long-time Liberal supporter. He admires John Major as the man who "killed off socialism" in 1992. "Thatcher had done most of the heavy-lifting but if Major hadn't beaten Kinnock, then socialism would have been still alive. We all owe him a lot for that.

"But what Major didn't realise was that the country was only just beginning to change in 1992; he thought that it had stopped. Major offered Thatcherism with a friendly face; Blair offered strong leadership, strong rhetoric and moral conservatism with an even friendlier face. Blair has always seemed to be going somewhere. Labour will unlock some of the energy that we are wasting in this country."

Beside us on the stairs a phalanx of fellow businessmen is going up to a breakfast given by the Shandwick public relations company. I follow on. We are all going to listen to the Prime Minister rallying the company's corporate clients. Robert, it turns out, is taking

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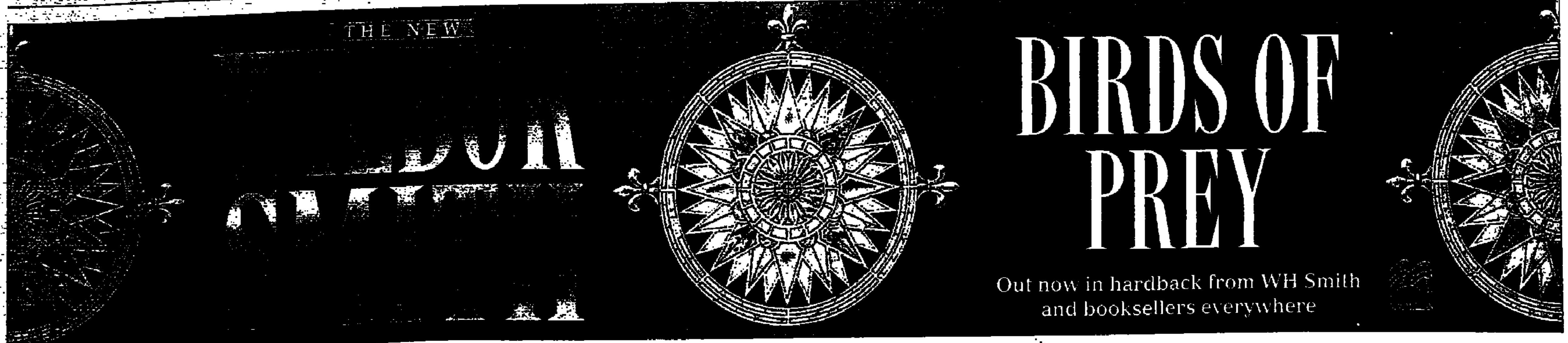

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SERIOUS SHOPPING | THE GOOD BUY

ROBERT CRAMPTON

I heard Dr Jonathan Sacks, the chief rabbi, on the radio on Monday, talking to Melvyn and Tariq and the rest of the gang about the need to rediscover traditional morality. Dr Sacks said that, in some quarters, modern life had been reduced to "working and shopping". His tone left the listener in no doubt that he thought this was a poor state of affairs. Shopping, he did not need to add in that company, was an axiomatically corrosive activity, both cause and effect of the dangerously wobbly condition of the moral order, about which Dr Sacks is so concerned.

Having just been asked to take on this column, I was taken aback by Dr Sacks's view. I had assumed this to be a pretty innocuous little slot, tucked up cosily in the blameless Weekend section — yet now a learned and much-respected man was citing the popularity of my new subject as an example of all that was wrong with the world. Ridiculous as it may seem, I feel compelled to write my first offering as a defence of the business of going into a shop.

The exchange of money for goods or services is often held up for headshaking and chinstroking. Shopping is denounced as a sterile, uncreative and soulless way to spend time — a modern evil. I believe it to be none of these things — as I shall irrefutably demonstrate in the coming weeks.

For now, I suggest two thoughts: one is that those doing the denouncing usually have wives who do much of their shopping for them. The other is that the strength of their denunciations depends on what is being shopped for. For instance, I bet that Dr Sacks — I don't know this for sure but feel it uncontroversial to assert — enjoys going to bookshops. I predict that he does not have a mental picture of Waterstones or Dillons when he comes on the radio and condemns shopping. I predict too that Dr Sacks does not condemn the shopper who, right now, may well be reading the jacket of *The Politics of Hope* by Dr Jonathan Sacks, deciding whether to part with £15.99 for the pleasure of owning it.

I further predict that Dr Sacks owns more books than he will ever read — most educated, no, *every* educated person I have ever met certainly does. If Jonathan Sacks, or Melvyn Bragg or Tariq Ali can take me into their hallowed studies and *not* be able to point to at least one volume that has remained uncracked since the day they bought it — because they liked the look of it, or they decided that they should know more about such-and-such and then realised that they couldn't be bothered, or because they just fancied spending some money — then the binding on my argument falls apart. But I don't think they can do that, and my argument remains intact.

So I think that, if Dr Sacks were to look deep into his soul, he could not deny that he has at some time bought a book — and who knows what else? — purely for the thrill of parting with money in order to possess it. He must admit that he has derived pleasure from the shopping act. Who would blame him? Beautiful; tempting things, books — as are many things you find in shops. The prospect of enhancing our lives with a little beauty is reason enough for most of us to go shopping, over and above the need to pick up a pint of semi-skimmed on the way home.

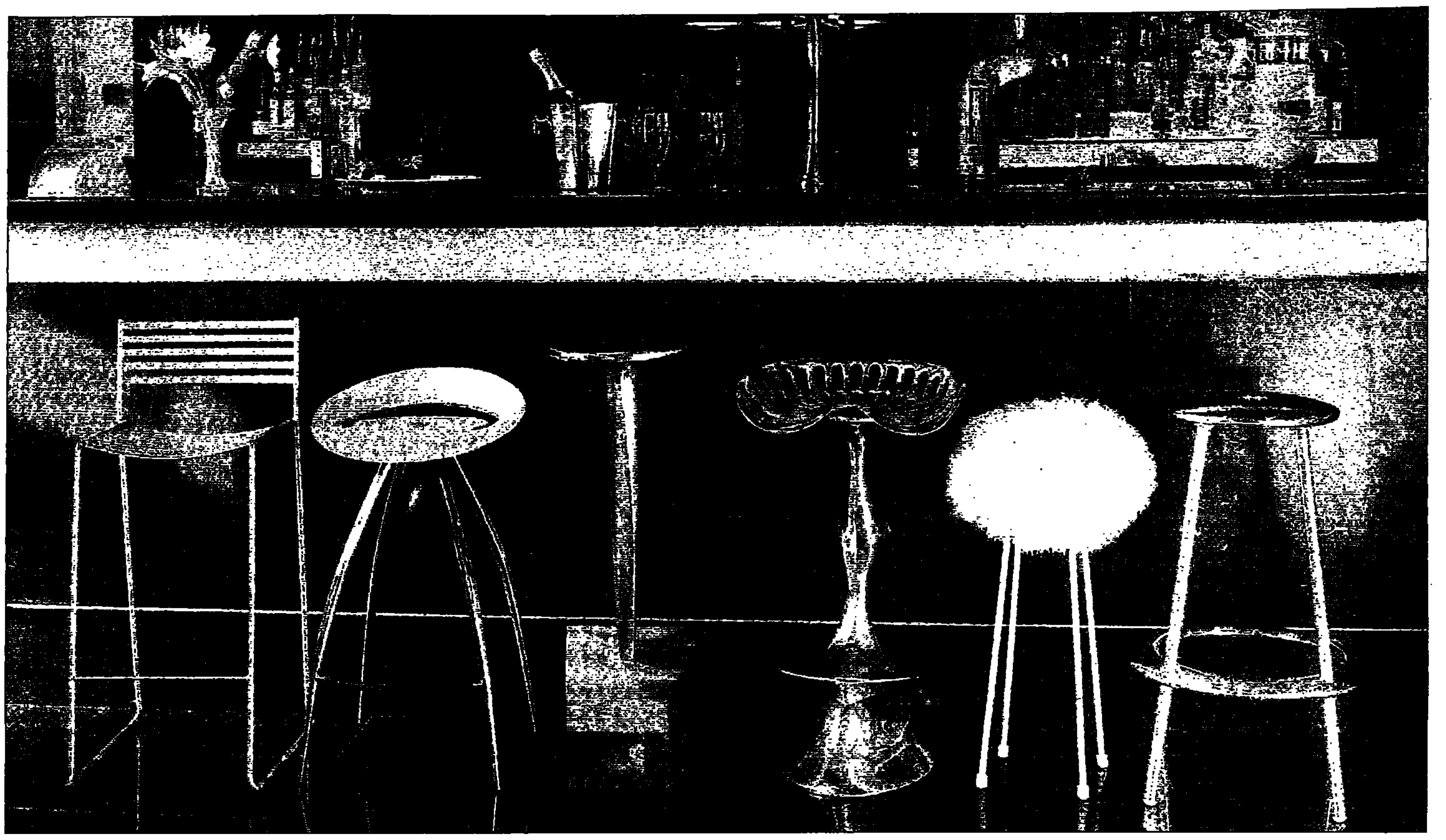
So there is the search for beauty, and there is the search for self improvement too. I glance at my own bookshelves. I see, at random, *Landscape and Memory* by Simon Schama, I see *The End of History* by Francis Fukayama, I see *Preparing for the 21st Century* by Paul Kennedy, all unread, all bought for a mixture of motives — because I liked the look of them, because I wanted to keep up, because buying these books said something about the sort of person I wanted to be. Much the same motives, I am sure, as drive other people who buy too many shoes or clothes or cosmetics or any of the other things of which Dr Sacks probably does not approve. They were mistakes, those shopping trips, but honourable ones.

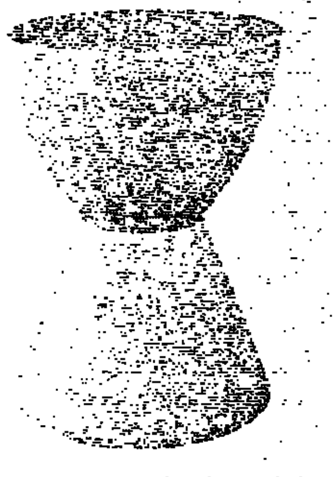
As I said, this is my first shopping column. I apologise for trundling such a heavy trolley over you the reader, and indeed over the estimable Jonathan Sacks, whose book I really must buy, and, what's more, read. A man must examine his conscience. I have done so, and I find it to be clear. Next week, nitty gritty: I visit the hardware shop and attempt to buy half a dozen masonry nails.

The best seats in the house

The latest barstools mix industrial chic with comfort and safety, says

Sudi Pigott





ABOVE: Philippe Starck stool in fennel, orange or lavender plastic, £49.50, Conran Shop (0171-589 7401)

MAIN PICTURE (left to right): Stax silver-finished metal slatted stool, £75, Heal's (0171-636 1666). Lyra bar stool in natural beech and chrome, £205, Heal's, as before. Aluminium nail stool with soft or hardwood base, from £195, Stephen Einhorn (0171-359 4977). Limited edition Mercury bar stool in aluminium with a seat design based on an antique tractor, £600, Phillip Watts, Three Designers (0171-633 9494). Pom Pom stool made from Tibetan lamb's wool, £200, Precious McBane (by appointment only; 0171-403 5270). Tall aluminium Luna bar stool, £230, Allermuir (01254 682421)

Thanks to Café Coast, 28 Lavender Hill, SW11. Photographs: **Des Jenson.** Styling: **Caroline Griffiths**

Continued from page 1

his briefcase and copy of *The Times* somewhere else. A pity. Compared to the complaints about the press and the opinion polls which I hear at the breakfast-fest (laced with some unbreakfastlike discussion of Delhi-belly following the PM's visit to India) the analysis of my Somerset acquaintance seems rather powerful. The Prime Minister says that he is looking forward to getting back on his soap box. He expresses enormous faith in the power of Michael Heseltine (or "Hezzy", as he calls him, placing a "y" where headline-writers prefer an "a"). He impresses upon his fellow breakfasters the power of the economic recovery to change voters' minds.

Pall Mall: 23.1.97

How does John Major deal with an opponent who has moved himself so certainly and so forcefully on to Tory territory and still seems to have so much momentum behind him? The questioner is a worried Conservative from Gloucestershire. His potential respondents in London's clubland are all rather quiet. What sort of Prime Minister would Tony Blair be? Would he give way to the Left at the first battle or would he keep to the path that he has held in Opposition? An answer finally comes from a very senior Conservative for whom "Tony Blair is a man who won't ... let ... Britain ... down". Every one of these words falls singly with a thud and repeats like whispered thunder.

Primrose Hill: 25.1.97

I am back at dinner with my property-developing friends. This time the place and the weather allow a larger gathering which includes a recently selected Conservative candidate. No Suffolk hail or flying pebbles could match the fury of this soon-to-be-MP at even the chance that *The Times* may back Tony Blair: "Why do you have to wait? Why not endorse us now? New Labour is a con-trick: its momentum is a bit of magic: I don't believe you could ever fall for it."

I try to explain why New Labour *might* be able to make new welfare reforms, why the party which created the welfare state *might* be the party that has the public consent to cut it back. The Conservatives' embrace of Labour's postwar settlement was the key to their re-election in 1951. Has not Labour now done the reverse, embraced Thatcher's reforms and promised to move them on? I cannot remember her replies — only the fine food and the spattering of her incredulity.

St James's: 28.1.97

The Times Literary Supplement cites a quotation from the philosopher Elie Kedourie: Conservative discourse is the one "which hugs most closely the shape of this world". Or, as Dr Johnson put it, "I live in the world and I take, in some degree, the colour of the world as it moves along".

At the birthday party of a formidable Tory fixer a politics-watcher argues to me that the sense of the country is "for change much farther and faster than you or I or any of these people [he waves his arms around the club] would have expected". He does not want to blame John Major. He prefers impersonal forces. "This sense has been around for a long time," he says. "Since the '92 election?" I suggest, echoing Robert's words in the Knightsbridge hotel. "No, longer, since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Without an external threat the Left is free to climb into our garden. It has happened in America, too. We don't believe any more in big cuts in tax and spending; so it is just a matter of who will best run the national shop at its current size. The fundamental ingredient of the change to the left is not ideology but movement itself. It may be dangerous. But none of us has dealt with it."

We pause for a glass of water: there is a lot of abstemiousness and not much celebration here. "John Major has made a vacuum and called it Conservatism. It is not enough to rely on defending Westminster from the Scots and Belgians — particularly when Westminster includes Neil Hamilton and Brussels is like an occupying power already. Tony Blair has sensed that vacuum, occupied the space and given it his own name and his own hopes."

Pall Mall: 7.2.97

"It's going well, isn't it?" says one of the numerous (probably too numerous) Tory strategists who are readying themselves to run the campaign and lunching with editors along the way. "Before Christmas the Prime Minister was a bit worried about whether he was going to win but now he's absolutely certain he will win." With each brightly coloured plate of food (from golden ginger to glowing beetroot coulis) in his even more brightly coloured club restaurant he sets out a different set of achievements. "Unless you can show me why and where you disagree with any of our policies you must surely support us in *The Times* on polling day."

I try to explain that, as far as I can see, the Tory campaign is not going well at all. "Yes, *The Times* does support many of the Government's policies but, if there was ever an administration that was less than the sum of its parts, it is this one."

He does not sense any sort of change except a rather "thoughtless fatigue" with the Government. "A true political tide" requires massive problems (like uncontrollable inflation or unemployment), credible solutions (normally with an -ism at the end) and committed leadership (Attlee, Bevan, Thatcher).

I see this point. But these three conditions are not always visible at the time of voting. Sometimes you can only feel them and sometimes not even that. "You mean policy is one thing and politics quite another?" he snorts.

Another well-known Tory supporter is waiting for a taxi on the street outside. "I know people want change," he says, "but they can change anything they like these days. It's a bloody Marks & Spencer society. Why do they want to change governments too?"

Grosvenor House Hotel: 10.2.97

"The Conservative Winter Ball is secondary only to the Party Conference", according to its chairman. Shirley Bassey is here. So are some big spenders who pay £170,000 for a signed book by Norma Major and £14,000 for Lord Archer's auctioneer's hammer. A senior Cabinet minister greets me rather acidly and inquires if the occasion is not "a bit partisan" for me: so someone has got the message. A politician whom I have never had a meal with in 15 years of writing about him says that "we must have lunch": he speaks in a light muffled tone as though from the inside of a refrigerator. This does not suggest sincerity. A senior QC looks embarrassed, most sincerely embarrassed, to be seen here at all.

Shepherd's Bush Empire: 11.2.97

There is 80 minutes to wait before the American singer Suzanne Vega comes on stage. I talk for a while to a quiet man who is alone except for a *Evening Standard*. He works for BT and claims to be "a bit of a Conservative". He thinks that Tony Blair will "get in, do a few things I like and quite a few things I don't like". Will you vote for him? "Oh yes," he says. When did you decide? "About three years ago." What about John Major? He looks at me as though I were an empty beer cup. When Suzanne Vega comes on, she rather surprisingly makes a joke about Shirley Bassey. My *Evening Standard* man laughs and whispers, "I thought she was dead".

Eastbourne, Sussex: 2.3.97

The sea here is free of hail. The weather is warm. The crocuses are flowering around the bright new fences in the park, where the council has stopped the children biking over the grass. There are two women sitting underneath a new sculpture: it is made of retired wooden breakwaters from the beach and entitled *Eighteen Thousand Tides*.

Over the past eight weeks I have grown used to approaching *Times* readers and asking them questions that usually editors do not ask. One of the women is actually sitting on *The Times*, the two-day-old edition carrying the Wirral by-election catastrophe for the Tories: I hope (I am ever hopeful) that she has read it first.

She has always been a Labour voter. She had expected that John Major would have done more "for the poor, for the schools and the young people out of work". But she would not have voted for him even if he had.

What about her friends? Were any of them Conservatives?

Yes. "But Tony Blair is going to win, isn't he? If we don't have Labour in this time, when are we ever going to have them?"

She leans against the bleached white posts. "There are times for things and their time has gone."

> In Eastbourne, a woman was sitting on a copy of *The Times*. 'If we don't have Labour in this time, when are we ever going to have them?' she asks

Eighteen Thousand Tides at Eastbourne: made from reclaimed wooden breakwaters

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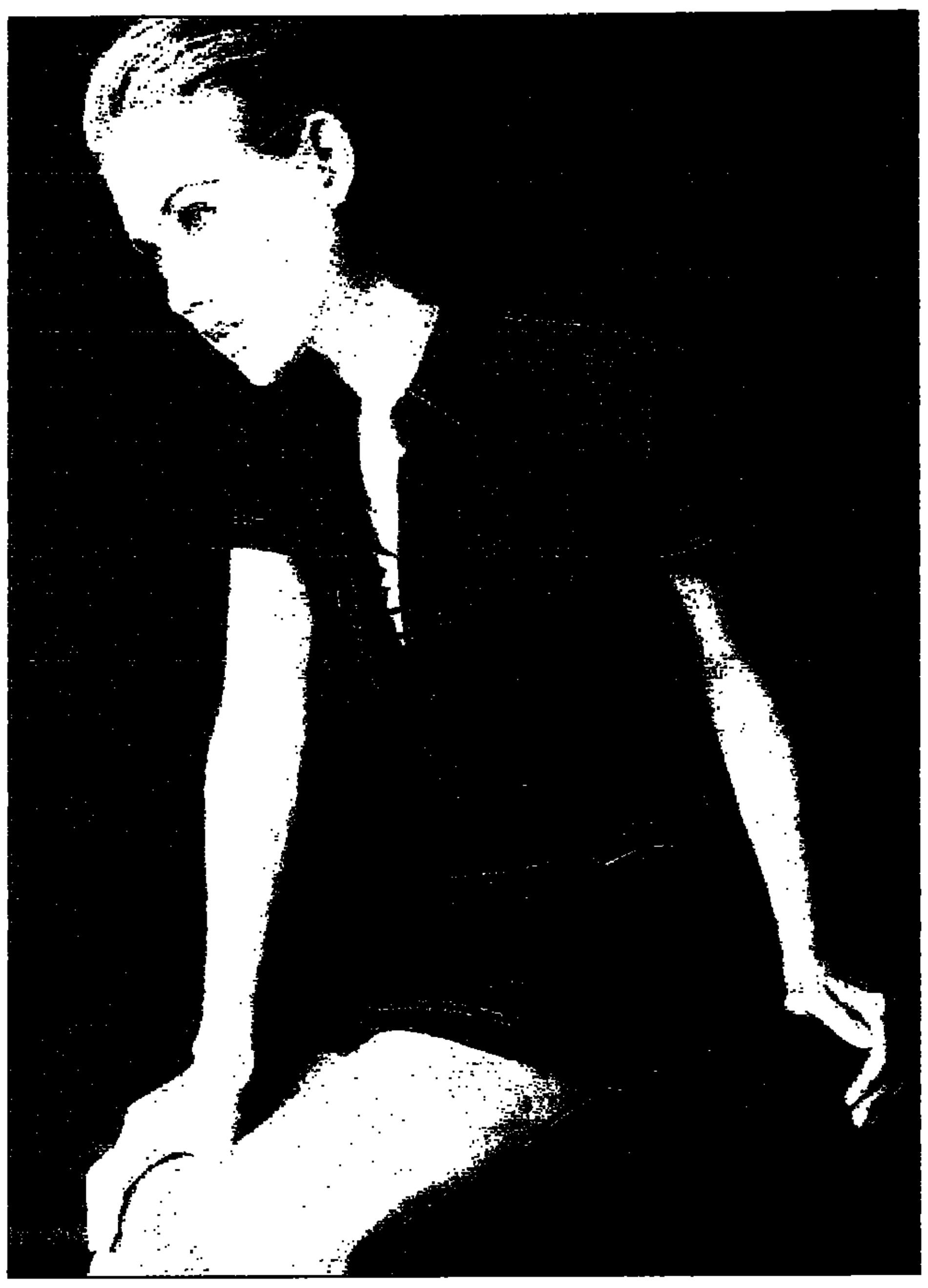
Blue belles will be out in force this spring as denim is given a stylish edge, says **Heath Brown**



Mood INDIGO

Wearing denim doesn't have to mean donning an old pair of blue jeans or a faded Levi's jacket anymore. Smarter cuts and pretty looks are giving it a new edge.

The washed-out, double-stitched traditional styles are now being discarded and replaced by deep indigo denim of almost industrial-strength stiffness. The fabric is getting a make-over and is being used for expensive tailoring and couture-style dresses. Chanel recently included signature designs made from denim and last season saw Alexander McQueen and John Galliano using it patched and pleated on wide trousers and sharp jackets.

The whole feel of this fabric makes it a perfect antidote to over-the-top frilly flounces and so the two mix well. A complete denim outfit also works and there is a wide selection of trouser suits around. Bootleg cut trousers in this stiff fabric keep their shape and look smart with a short-sleeved fitted shirt. If you go for more traditionally cut five-pocket jeans they must be indigo and have a turn-up of at least three inches to be really trendy.

The name in jeans at the moment is Evisu, with basic baggy cuts selling at more than £100. Surprisingly, even at this price their arrival in Britain last year saw them completely sold out to the label-conscious crowd.

Maintenance of this stiffer denim is important and a full wash and spin is not advisable. It is best to have them dry-cleaned to retain their deep colouring and keep the fabric well-groomed.

Accessory designers are also using denim: for shoes, bags and hats. In fact it is everywhere this season and getting the blues has never been so much fun.

RIGHT: Denim jacket, £94, Martin Kidman, as before. Denim hat, £42, Dollargrand (0171-794 3028)

ABOVE: Denim drop-waist dress, £22, Etam, 484 Oxford Street, W1 (0171-494 7732). Cream and blue stripe vest, £26, Martin Kidman, 309 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-823 7310)

LEFT: Khaki stretch shirt, £26.99, Jeffrey Rogers (0171-208 4300). Denim button-through skirt, £45, French Connection, branches nationwide (0171-580 2507). Brown leather gold buckle belt, £32, Martin Kidman, as before. Denim shoulder bag, £10, Etam, as before. Brown leather wedges, £75, Bertie, 36 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-935 2002)

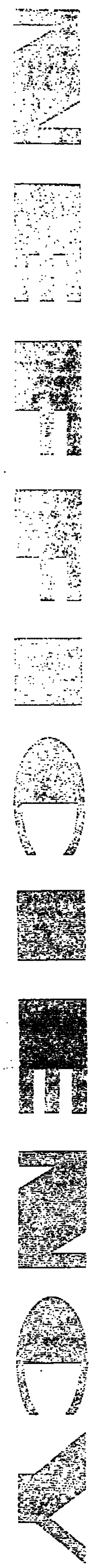
RIGHT: Indigo denim-look linen belted jacket, £70; bootleg jeans, £35, Warehouse branches nationwide. Denim cork wedges, £24.99, Ravel, branches nationwide (0171-631 0224)

Photographs by **Richard Burns.** Hair and make-up by **Sally Kvalheim** for Jo Hansford. Styling by **Amandip Uppal.** Denim two-seater sofa from **Next Interiors**, £449 (mail order 0345 100500)

THREE OF A KIND

The floaty feminine look around at the moment is too overbearing for some, so the answer is to wear a printed chiffon scarf that will add femininity without taking over. Here are our favourites. H.B.

TOP: Orange two-tone floral print chiffon scarf, £78, Gordana at Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-708 2538)
MIDDLE: Black and red swirl print scarf, £6.99, Next, 54-58 Kensington High Street, W8 (0116-284 9424)
BOTTOM: Pure silk chiffon large polka dot scarf, £52, Fiona Pitkin, A La Mode, Hans Crescent, SW1 (0171-221 8641)



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Plant names? It's a jungle out there

Stephen Anderton

on the book no one should be without

Behind all the names in gardening, the media presenters and personalities, there are many unsung figures whose effect on our gardening lives is much greater.

Where would gardeners be without four volumes of "Bean", as W.J. Bean's invaluable *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles* is known? But what kind of mind could compile a work like that? And what kind of mind can edit *The Plant Finder*, that annual and exhaustive compendium of which nursery sells what plant? How can anyone know and comprehend the 75,000 plants it contains and be sure the names are correct?

Tony Lord has edited *The Plant Finder* since it began ten years ago. He has a doctorate in chemistry, studied gardening at Kew, and worked for some years as garden adviser to the National Trust before turning freelance as an author, consultant and photographer.

Gingery, and with a drooping moustache, he has the slight stoop of a gardener (or a writer) and one of those calm, level voices I associate with paediatricians and psychiatrists. There is a bit of his native Leeds in the accent, too.

Over the years "the botanists" and subsequently *The Plant Finder* have taken a lot of stick for changing familiar plant names. Would you let this man change your plant names? Having talked to Mr Lord, I think I would. Mainly because he is resistant to change.

"There has to be a good reason for us to accept a change," he says. By "us" he means himself as editor, and, when he feels in need of advice, an advisory panel of experts at the Royal Horticultural Society, which publishes *The Plant Finder*. Mr Lord is not a botanist, but he is a gardener with an encylopaedic knowledge of plants, and he is as reluctant as you or I to see names changed on the whim of some novel PhD. *The Plant Finder* must surely be as comprehensive and as universal a list of plants as has ever been published. At the University of North Carolina, it is even set as a course book for horticulture students, as a representation of cultivated plants. And with recognition like that, the names *must* be accurate.

But who decides what is right? Over the past ten years there has been considerable correction of plant names, often to get back to the proper, previously published name. Mr Lord sees this process as largely complete. "I do not foresee many more changes and we are getting the problem of different names for the same variety sorted out, too." That must be a good thing. How often do you see the same variety of some plant in nurseries under different names? "A few genera, such as saxifraga and willow, are still in an awful muddle. But they can be sorted out, as bamboos were."

As we talked, a bamboo expert arrived and they lamented a new paper by a rising botanist revising the names of bamboos. "Just when we thought we had them sorted out," the two of them groaned. "It really is perverse the way people try to rearrange the names." And this from the editor of *The Plant Finder*. Proof, were it needed, that he is on the gardener's side.

But there is more to *The Plant Finder* than accuracy. Mr Lord says its main aim is still "to tell people where to find the plants they want". He should know. From November to March he works full-time reviewing the lists of plants which the contributing nurseries supply. A small team at the Royal Horticultural Society loads the lists on to computer to form the substance of *The Plant Finder*. But Mr Lord checks the 7,000 or 8,000 new names which come in every year against the available scientific or breeders' literature. Fifty per cent will be newly-bred cultivars, 20 per cent old cultivars reappearing for sale and an exciting 30 per cent will be new plants from the wild or collections abroad. Who said the age of new introductions was over? The book gets fatter every year, and nurserymen such as Michael Mitchell, of Slack Top Alpines at Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire, are pleased to be listed in there. Even when, as Mr Mitchell admits, they do not do mail order, it still pays to be included.

"Because we are a specialised nursery where people are looking for a particular plant, they tend to use *The Plant Finder*. Plants are listed alphabetically with nurseries that supply them and we often get calls from people just browsing," Mr Mitchell says.

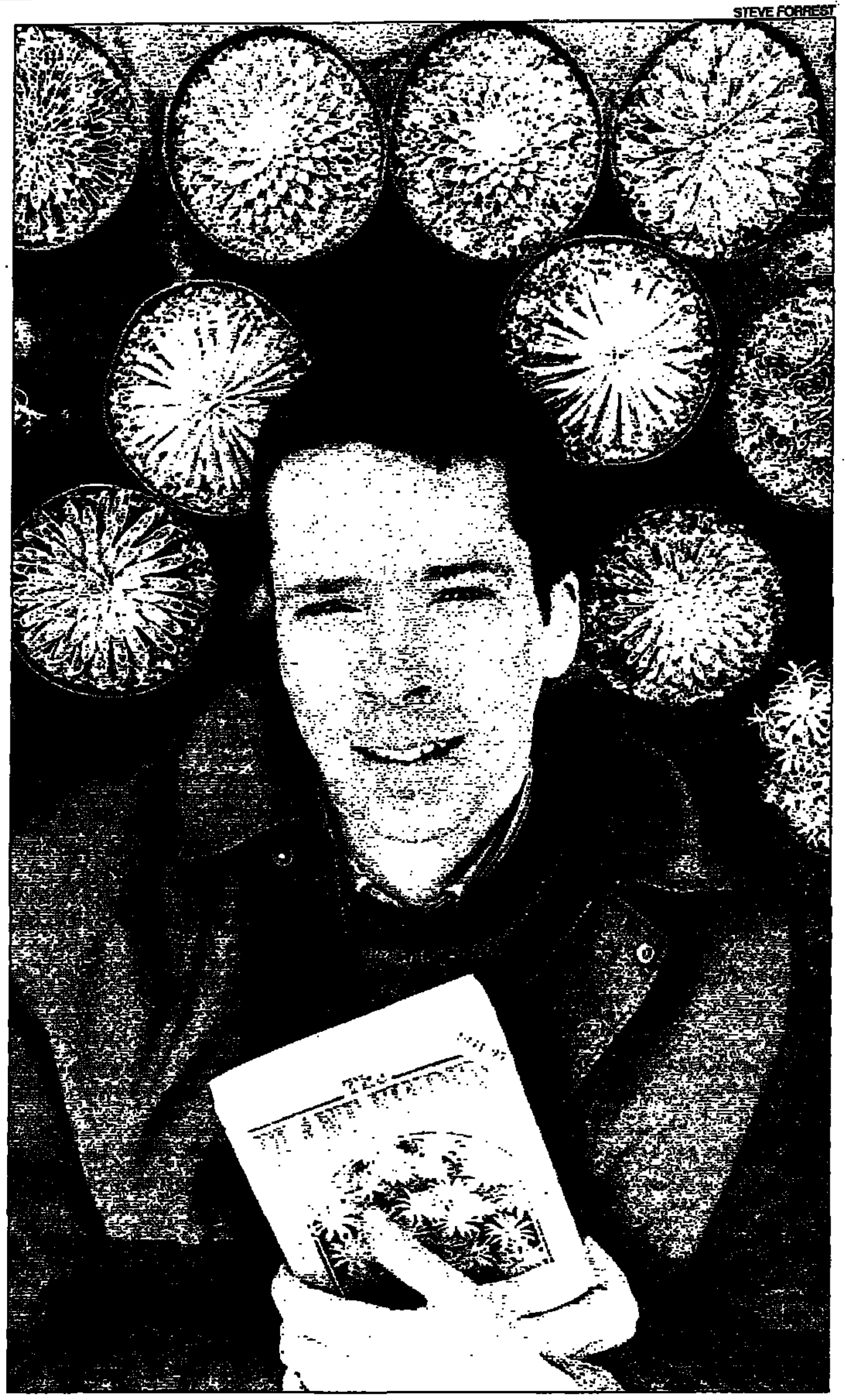
At present, *The Plant Finder* does not deal with fruit or vegetables, because of the variability from seed and the greater regional use of local names for fruit trees. Many seed companies sell the same range of seed strains under different names, to add to the confusion. But for those with a suitable computer, a CD-Rom is available, the *PPP Index*, which contains *The Plant Finder* as well as *The Fruit and Vegetable Finder*, and an index of mainland European nurseries.

It is all a far cry from the early 1980s, when the nearest thing to *The Plant Finder* was a "Hardy Plant Directory" on card index, run by Robin and Joan Grout, from their home in Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire, for the Hardy Plant Society, or Mr Lord's directory of nurseries within the National Trust.

I asked Mr Lord if he would know all those 75,000 plants if he saw them, and could he grow them? The answer was a resounding no to both questions. Which is a great relief. He is human then. But he does know which plants should be which and, vitally, where we can buy them. We gardeners should give this man a medal. In gratitude.

- The Plant Finder *is available from bookshops at £12.99. The CD-Rom* PPP Index, *£39.99, can be ordered on the direct-mail line 01886 821881.*
- *Slack Top Alpines, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 7HA (01422 845348)*

STEVE FORREST



Michael Mitchell of Slack Top Alpines. "We often get calls from people just browsing"

GARDEN ANSWERS

Q **I have an area four by 15 yards covered in aconites and snowdrops. An old pear stood there until the great storms. Is there anything I can do to maintain interest during the summer without weakening the aconites?** — A. Roome, Boughton Monchelsea, Kent.

A If you want to keep the aconites and small bulbs, I would do nothing to hasten the process of recolonisation by grass. But in the interim, why not plant dwarf narcissi and bluebells, late summer-flowering *Cyclamen hederifolium*, and *Crocus speciosus* for the autumn, with a few groups of colchicums. For summer, hardy agapanthus or acanthus will give height and substance.

Q **Separating a paved area at the back of my house from the garden is a new wall. The wall has two planting holes in the top, about the size of a two-litre ice-cream box. What could I grow in them? I would like something colourful and fragrant, such as ground-cover roses.** — E. Winter, Carlisle.

A I take it they have drainage holes? I would treat them like hanging baskets — you might even make liners for them. Roses would not enjoy having their roots cooked and nor would many small shrubs but you could plant primroses and helianthemums for spring, and verbena and petunias for summer.

Q **My brick garage keeps getting covered in ivy. I have cut through the main stems at ground level, but it comes back. How can I kill ivy for good?** — F. Preston, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks.

A The only thing which slows ivy down is reaching the top of a wall or tree, where it then makes shorter, flowering growth. If you cannot abide to see it do this, then you must dig out the root and all the stems on the ground nearby. It should not be necessary to use weedkillers, so long as you are able to dig it freely.

STEPHEN ANDERTON

- *Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.* The Times *also regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.*

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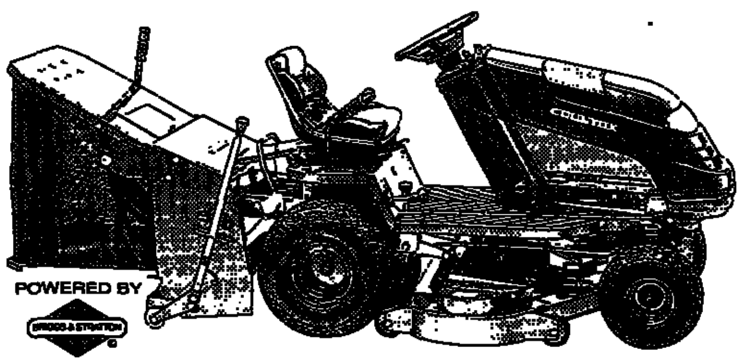

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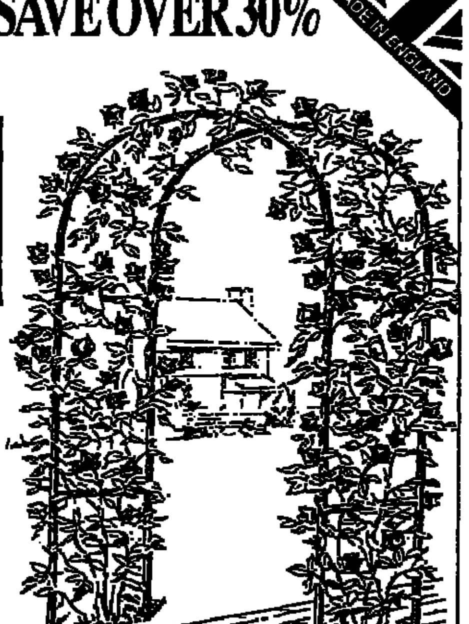

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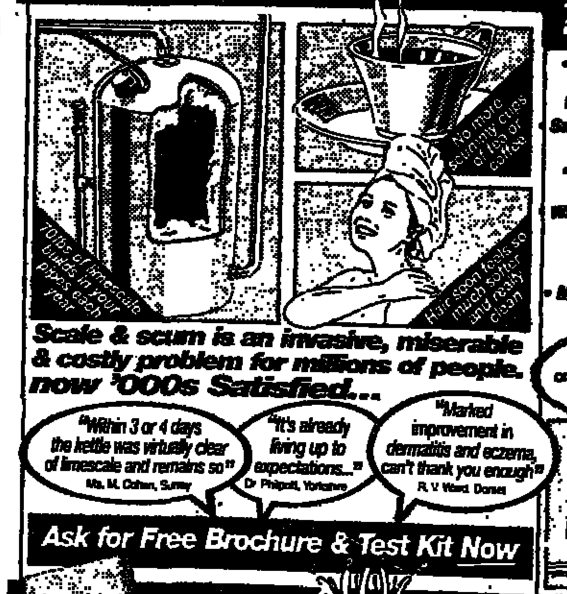

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Auricula's ravishing flowers are luring more enthusiasts, says **Barbara Abbs**

"I see nothing in it but what is innocent: and it . . . serves as a *gracious relaxation* for gentlemen of the study and the office," wrote a French enthusiast during the reign of Louis XIV about the growing of auriculas, and, judging by their increasing popularity, it is as true today.

Auriculas are highly bred members of the primula family and have umbels of flowers in ravishing colours, with contrasting centres and, frequently, white-dusted foliage. They were developed from a hybrid of *Primula auricula* and *P. hirsuta*, which grow in the Alps.

The 16th-century Dutch gardening buff Clusius grew auriculas in Leiden, where they were known as *Auricula ursi* or "little bears' ears" because of their fleshy, pointed leaves. They found their way to northern France and Flanders and then to England. By the 18th century they were established here.

The attraction of auriculas is that exciting hybrids can be created, the plants are small, they need no heat in winter and vigorous ones soon produce "offsets" that can be swapped or given away.

For Adrian Orchard, growing auriculas is the perfect relaxation. A notary public, who commutes from the village of Southease in East Sussex to London, his working day is long and a spell outdoors each evening with his collection of plants relaxes him. His first glimpse of auriculas was on Geoffrey Smith's television programme *World of Flowers* some years ago, and it was love at first sight.

Today, in a cool part of his garden facing east, is a row of raised cold frames lined with a thick layer of gravel. Rows of "long toms" (tall clay pots particularly suitable for plants with a long, thick root) contain a wide range of auriculas. Among them is a plant of the oldest surviving variety, the deep plum 'Argus' from 1869, and varieties of his own. There is also one with narrow cream stripes on black, named 'Southease'.

With micropropagation, good auriculas are now more widely available. Before this, unusual specimens were passed among fellow "florists" and the best forms rarely found their way into commerce. The elaborate composts described in early books — barrowloads of goose dung soaked in buckets of bullock's blood and mixed with sugar-bakers' scum — have made auricula growing seem as esoteric as alchemy. Some enthusiasts still sieve manure and mix it with two-year-old leafmould, but many others simply use a loam-based compost with added grit and peat. Mr Orchard mixes two parts John Innes No 2 with half a part of grit and half a measure of peat.

Auriculas are divided into several groups: show auriculas, alpines and doubles. All classes have subdivisions, particularly show auriculas. In the 1740s cultivars with leaf-like green tissue instead of petals were produced. Where this edging is dusted with the farina or white meal that makes auriculas so distinctive, it appears grey. Where the farina is thick, the edge looks white. The finest flowers have a dense circle of farina, or paste, in the centre and a ground colour — black is highly thought of — that feathers out into the white, grey or green edge. They are as if made from a precious stone by Fabergé.

Only border auriculas should be grown out of doors in flower beds. They need moist but well-drained soil and a cool position. Buy plants from a specialist nursery or a show. Seeds from specialist suppliers are also available. Commercial seeds, often labelled as "Alpine auriculas", can be disappointing, producing variable flowers.

There are fashions in auriculas as in much else. Double flowers are popular again and resemble small camellias or old roses in shades of cream, gold, umber, plum or violet.

Striped flowers fell from favour in the 18th century, but one enthusiast of these, Allan Hawkes, a past president of the National Auricula and Primula Society, who lives in Rabley Heath, Hertfordshire, has been recreating them for 20 years with considerable success.

The auricula year begins in February when the plants "wake up". The beauty of many of the varieties is in the delicate white meal on leaves and flowers, and water can spoil it.

Pots should be watered individually using a can with a narrow spout. Water heavily in spring during the flowering period and lightly in summer. Mr Orchard uses a quarter-strength mix of tomato fertiliser during the growing period to ensure fine flowers.

After flowering, plants need repotting. Opinions differ as to the relative merits of clay or plastic pots, layers of crocks at the bottom of the pot or the best time to repot. Even long tom pots are not considered essential by every expert. In fact, auriculas tolerate a wide range of cultivation methods. Repotting times from May onwards are suggested, while August is a favourite in the south.

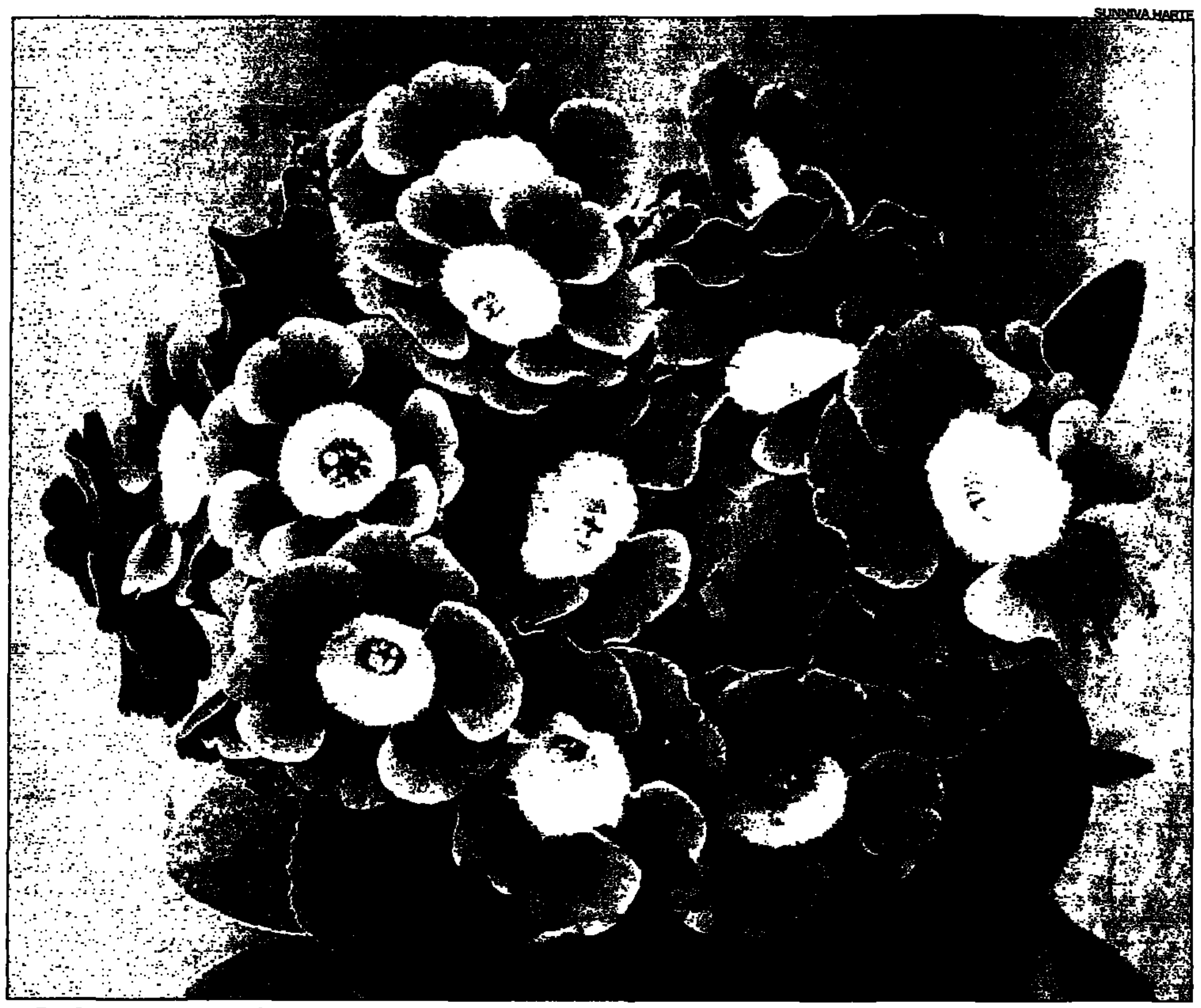
When repotting, compost is gently removed from the roots, which are then washed and examined for disease or pests and replanted in fresh compost. Small shoots or offsets are removed and potted separately to make additional plants. There is a burst of growth in early autumn and then the plants begin to die down, though they do not disappear.

The only things auriculas do not tolerate are waterlogging, drying out or over-heating. Alpine primulas are covered with snow all winter and can put their roots down further and further into cool crevices during summer. They cannot do this in pots.

With the right site for border auriculas or shady cold frames for show and alpine types, plus a little time to attend to their needs, more and more people are finding they can grow auriculas satisfactorily without recourse to alchemy.

FACT FILE

- The National Collection of Edged Auriculas will be shown at the Chelsea Flower Show, starting May 19, by Brenda Hyatt, of 1 Toddington Crescent, Bluebell Hill, Chatham, Kent ME5 9QT (01634 863251), and other rare varieties by Cravens Nurseries, 1 Foulds Terrace, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4LZ (01274 561412).
- Shows in the southern section of the National Auricula and Primula Society will be held at Datchet village hall, near Windsor, Berkshire, on Saturday, April 5 and Saturday, April 26.
- Information: Adrian Orchard on 0171-208 2901, or Lawrence Wigley, 67 Warnham Court Road, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey SM5 3ND.


SUNNIVA HARTE

Border auriculas grown by Adrian Orchard, of Southease, East Sussex, who breeds his own varieties as a means of relaxation

Thriving *Primula auricula*

WEEKEND TIPS

- Prune *Buddleia davidii* hard back to a framework of older wood, even though this means losing some early shoots.
- Cut down newly planted raspberry canes to 9in. Apply potash to established canes.
- Stand flowered pots of narcissi or hyacinths in a light, cool place such as a cold frame to die down, or plant out in the garden.

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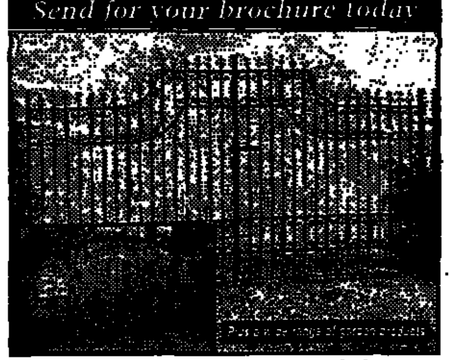

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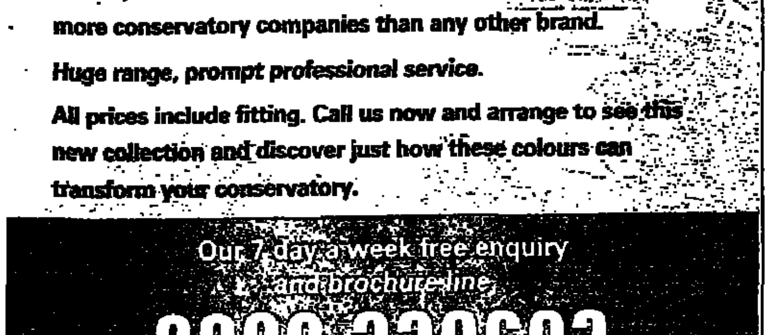

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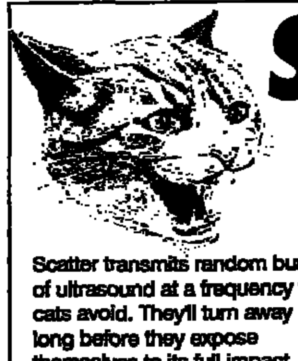

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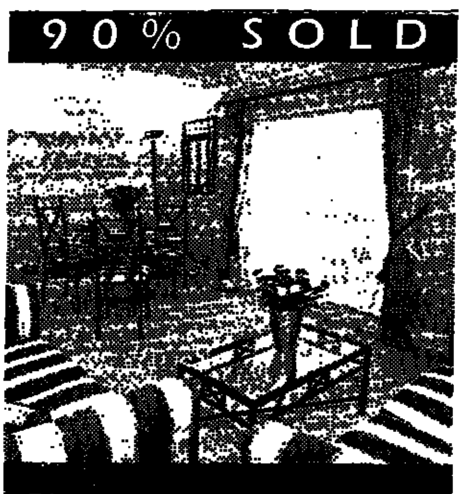

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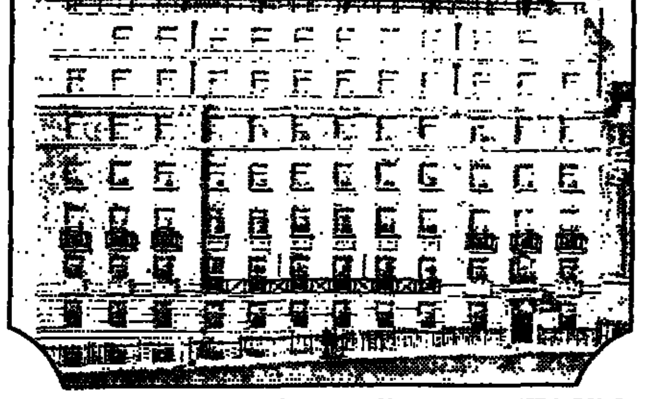

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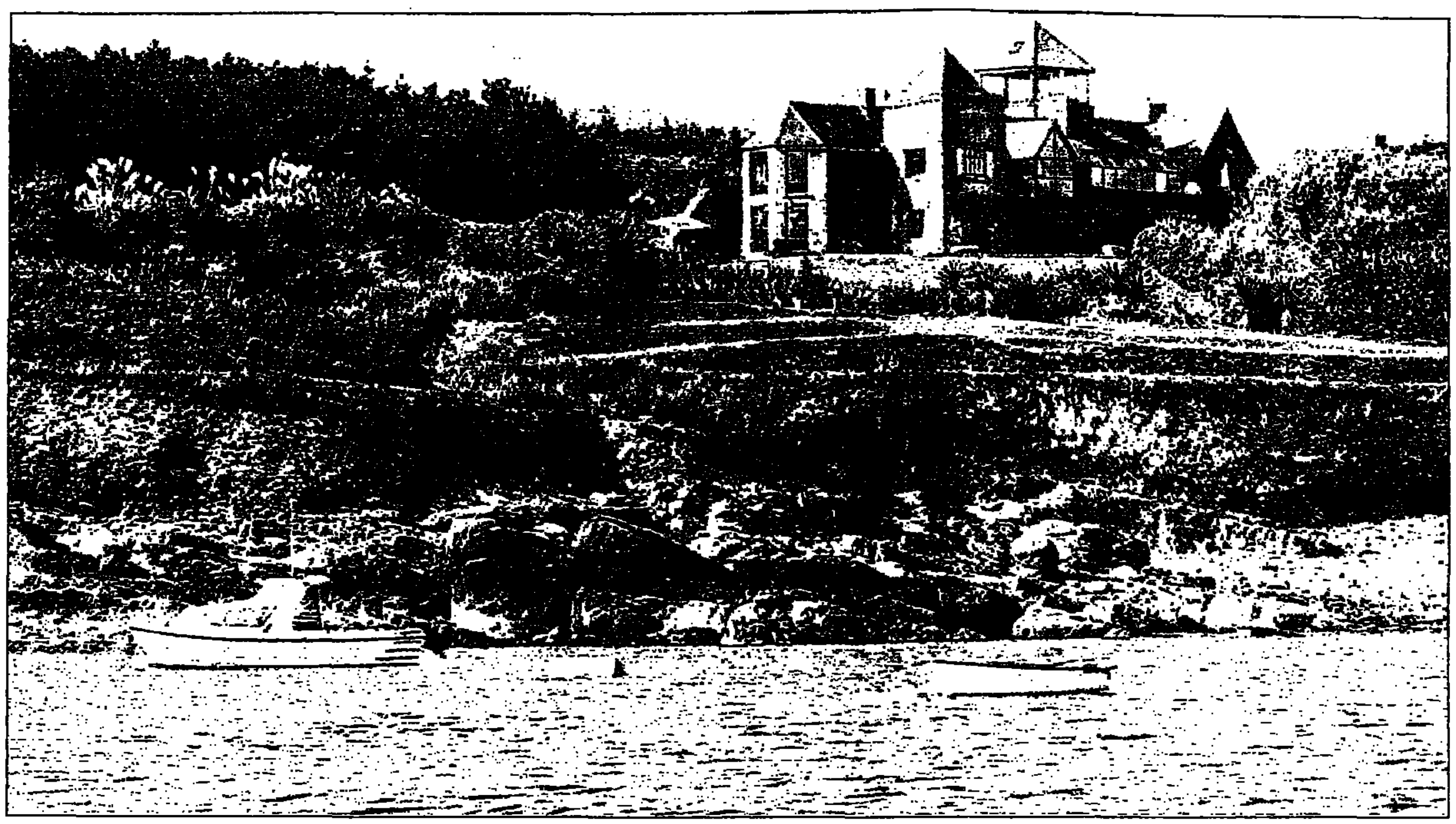
A house with a strange mix of ancient and modern architectural styles that looks down on its own private beach

Postcard views from the edge



Boolakeel House in Ballinskellig on the coast of County Kerry is a hybrid of flashy rock-star pad, traditional working farmhouse and modern Scandinavian chalet. Off the hall is a study (left) with carved **bookshelves and a slate fireplace. At the front of the house in the reception-area-cum-sitting-room (below left) there is an inglenook fireplace and a staircase of original 300-400 year old timbers (below right)**

DES JENSON

The village of Ballinskellig in County Kerry is changing fast. Along the potholed lanes, derelict fishermen's cottages sit next to renovated farms, rickety bars beside squires' retreats.

As we crawled up the drive, the view of the house, with its spikey roof and glassy add-ons, sank my *Ballykissangel*-induced *preconceptions*. The architecture is redolent of the new "Guinness-shire", where stone is mixed with chrome and potato chips give way to microchips. Boolakeel House is a hybrid of flashy rock-star pad, traditional working farmhouse and modern Scandinavian chalet.

The location makes up for any architectural indiscretions. It is a house on the edge. The wind blows down the chimneys and pogos on the slates, bringing with it the *harshness of the rugged coastline* and the warmth of the Gulf Stream. In the vast gardens, the elements provide ample tonic to revive you after a night in the local bar.

The original part of the house is 300-400 years old. The rest has evolved over the years, a project devised and completed by the current owner. This makes for an illogical layout. Cosy winter rooms with roaring peat fires adjoin lighter spaces with picture windows. In the winter dining room and morning room, the original timbers and heavy stone lull you to sleep, promising dreams of tinkers and little folk. In the kitchen, modern handmade fittings sit next to an antique butcher's block.

At the front of the house in the reception-area-cum-sitting-room there is a hearty inglenook fireplace, perfect for roasting chestnuts, although it sits uncomfortably in a room with light wood floors and stairs. A carved bar in the corner with comfy swivel stools creates the ambience of an American theme bar.

Off the hall, a fine study with intricately carved bookshelves, a pretty slate fireplace and coastline views ensure that you while away the day. At the back of the house, the summer dining room is light with the warmth and trappings of a botanical hot-house, with glass roof, understocked aquarium and jungle of plants.

Staring down from over the glass-topped dining table is a mural, commissioned more than ten years ago, depicting the current owner and local characters, stroking dogs and smoking flavoured tobacco. It is not a masterpiece of stroke-work, but after a night at Boolakeel I grew to like it, confident that it depicts the owner's famous hospitality.

There are six bedrooms upstairs. The master bedroom, with its own dressing room, is bright and airy with the clean sheen of a Habitat catalogue. The en suite bathroom is a vision in peach marble with steps up to a large sunken bath and views out to sea.

A narrow staircase leads you from the first floor to the confines of a glass lookout. Small, square and perfectly positioned, it is a place to paint, birdwatch and check up on your neighbours. It is so quiet it is difficult to remember that before the potato famine Ballinskellig was a village bursting at the seams. This was much to the distress of the local monks, who fled to the nearby Skellig Islands to escape the idle chitter-chat of mainland gossipmongers.

The 100 acres of cultivated gardens surrounding Boolakeel are a tribute to the current owner's ambition. He and his wife have planted more than half a million plants and shrubs since they moved here 25 years ago. She is a world-class potato expert, who is writing a definitive spud anthology. Many varieties of the starchy fruits of her labours are to be found in the expansive vegetable gardens.

Closer to the house, pines and spruces provide a wind-break around the ten acres of tropical gardens which boast many species of exotica. In what must have amounted to a huge earth-moving operation, large ponds have been ingeniously created between beds of shrubs, lines of trees and walls of hydrangeas.

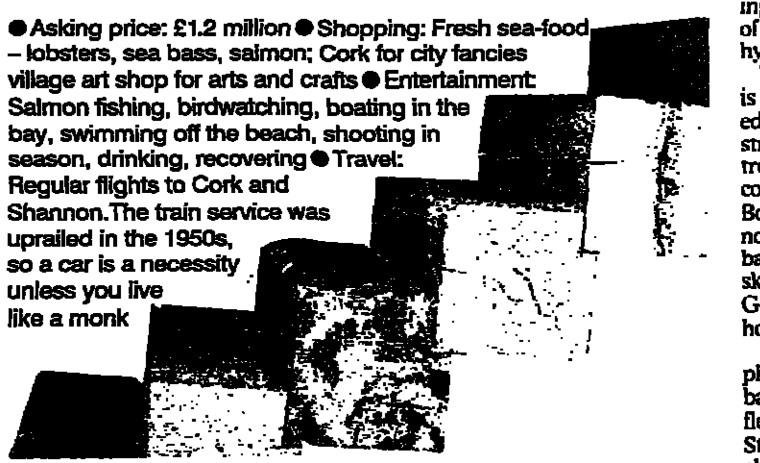
The hidden treasure of Boolakeel is the private beach below the rocky edge. Imagine novelty smugglers, stripy T-shirts and well-stocked treasure chests. This is Enid Blyton country: "The Adventures of Boolakeel Bay". There are enough nooks and crannies, hidden caves, banshee-like sound-effects and skinny dipping possibilities to keep George, Timmy et al busy for the hols.

In the summer this is the obvious place to entertain. Set up a barbeque and serve up sand-flecked lobster and seabass kebabs. Stomp over the sand, make life-changing decisions, then watch them dissolve into a tall glass of Murphy's down the road at Patsy's Place.

ALEX O'CONNELL

● *Agent: Knight Frank, 0171-629 8171.*

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



● Asking price: £1.2 million ● Shopping: Fresh sea-food – lobsters, sea bass, salmon; Cork for city fancies village art shop for arts and crafts ● Entertainment: Salmon fishing, birdwatching, boating in the bay, swimming off the beach, shooting in season, drinking, recovering ● Travel: Regular flights to Cork and Shannon. The train service was upreiled in the 1950s, so a car is a necessity unless you live like a monk

RAYNERS ROAD, Putney, SW15 **Freehold Price Guide: £550,000**
A Victorian house of about 410 sq m (4,420 sq ft) with great potential for a family house or other uses, subject to planning. Potentially 8/9 beds, 5 baths, 4 receptions, kitchen, b'fast rm, cloakroom, laundry, cellar, garage, parking, 26m × 19m (85ft × 60ft) garden.
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VICARAGE GARDENS, W8 **Freehold £1,300,000**
An attractive end-of-terrace Victorian family house, facing south with a garden and garage. 5 bedrooms, dressing room, 2 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, utility area, kitchenette, cloakroom, patio, garden, garage.
KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705

THE SHRUBBERY,
Lavender Gardens,
SW11

Close to Clapham Common, in a restored listed building of sixteen elegant apartments, a spectacular, beautifully presented ground floor flat with wonderful ceiling heights and period detail.

2 bedrooms, bathroom, large reception room, kitchen, designated parking space.

Share of freehold
£260,000

BATTERSEA:
0171-228 0174

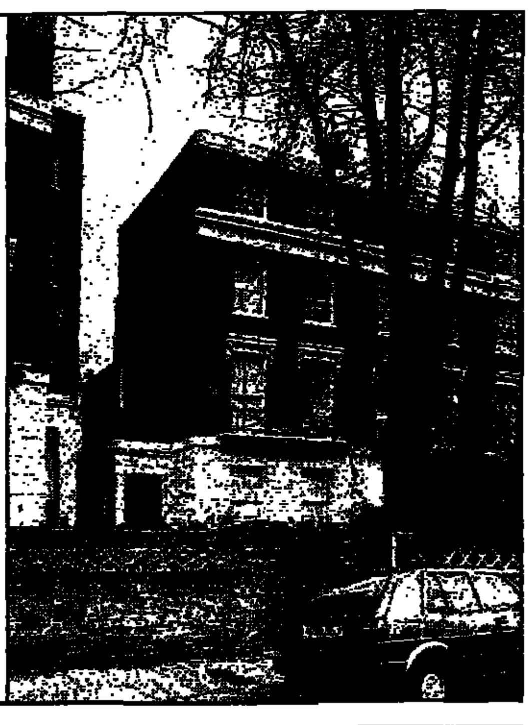
PRIMROSE HILL,
NW1

In a popular crescent near Regents Park and Primrose Hill, a semi-detached house in need of refurbishment with a 24.38m (80ft) garden.

4/5 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room, 2 cloakrooms, 3 reception rooms, *kitchen, utility room.* S/c flat with bedsitting room, kitchen and bathroom.

Freehold
£575,000

ST JOHN'S WOOD:
0171-722 5556



HAMPSHIRE
Lymington

A penthouse flat with exceptional views overlooking the town quay and Lymington River. 3 beds, bath, shower rm/clkrm, recep, kitchen, roof terrace, sauna, rear balcony, under cover parking.

Leasehold
Price Guide:
£175,000

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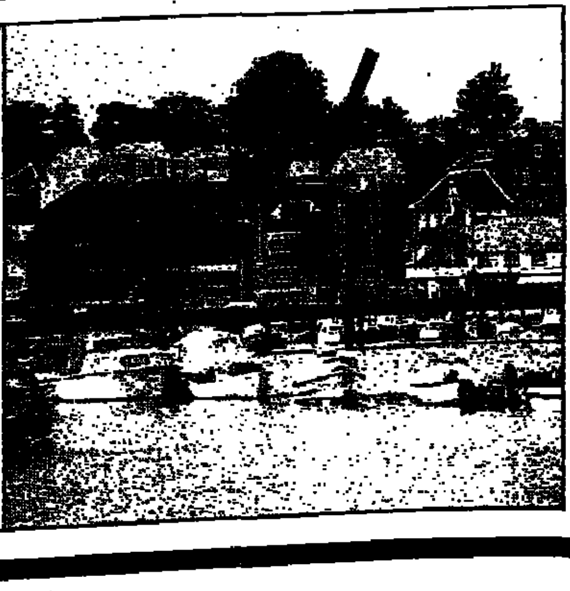


REGENT ON THE RIVER, SW6 **Lease to 2989 £350,000**
On the third floor of this prestigious riverside development, a wonderfully light flat with uninterrupted river views. 3 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, reception, kitchen, balcony, lift, underground parking space, communal gardens, membership of the Harbour Club.
FULHAM: 0171-731 4223

OXFORDSHIRE
Asthall Leigh

A detached bungalow with 1.82 ha (4.25 acres) including an all-weather tennis court, paddocks and stabling. 4/5 beds with en suite baths, 2 receps, kit, utility rm. Ground flr annexe of sitting rm/bed 5 and bathrm. Dble garage, barns, gardens.

Price Guide:
£295,000

OXFORD:
01865 311522

Three fantasies of a manor reborn

After John Gummer's call for new country houses, we asked three architects to design a dream manor

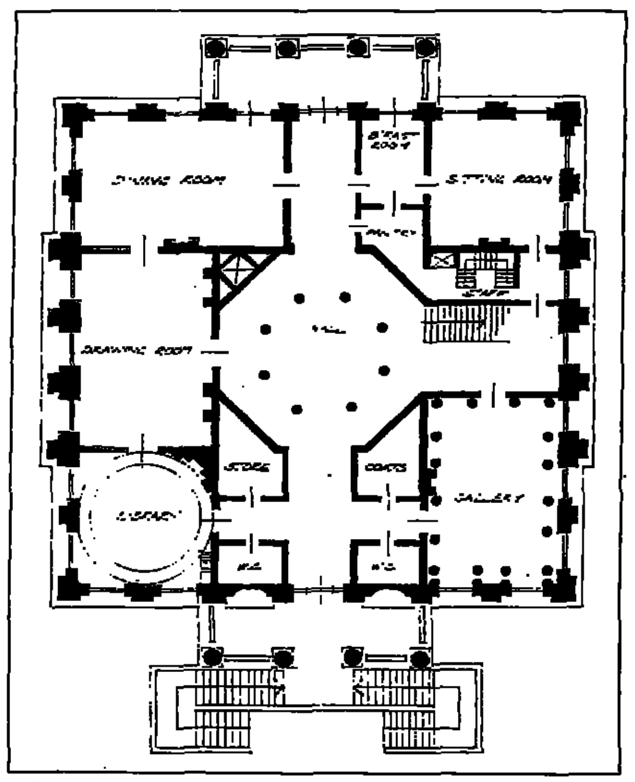
The Environment Secretary's decision to encourage a new generation of stately homes to "enhance" our countryside came as a welcome surprise to the country's growing number of millionaires. John Gummer intends to relax planning rules which have made it almost impossible to get local authority planning permission for new country houses.

"An isolated new house in the countryside may exceptionally be justified if it is clearly of the highest quality," Mr Gummer says in new planning guidance to local authority planners, published on February 19.

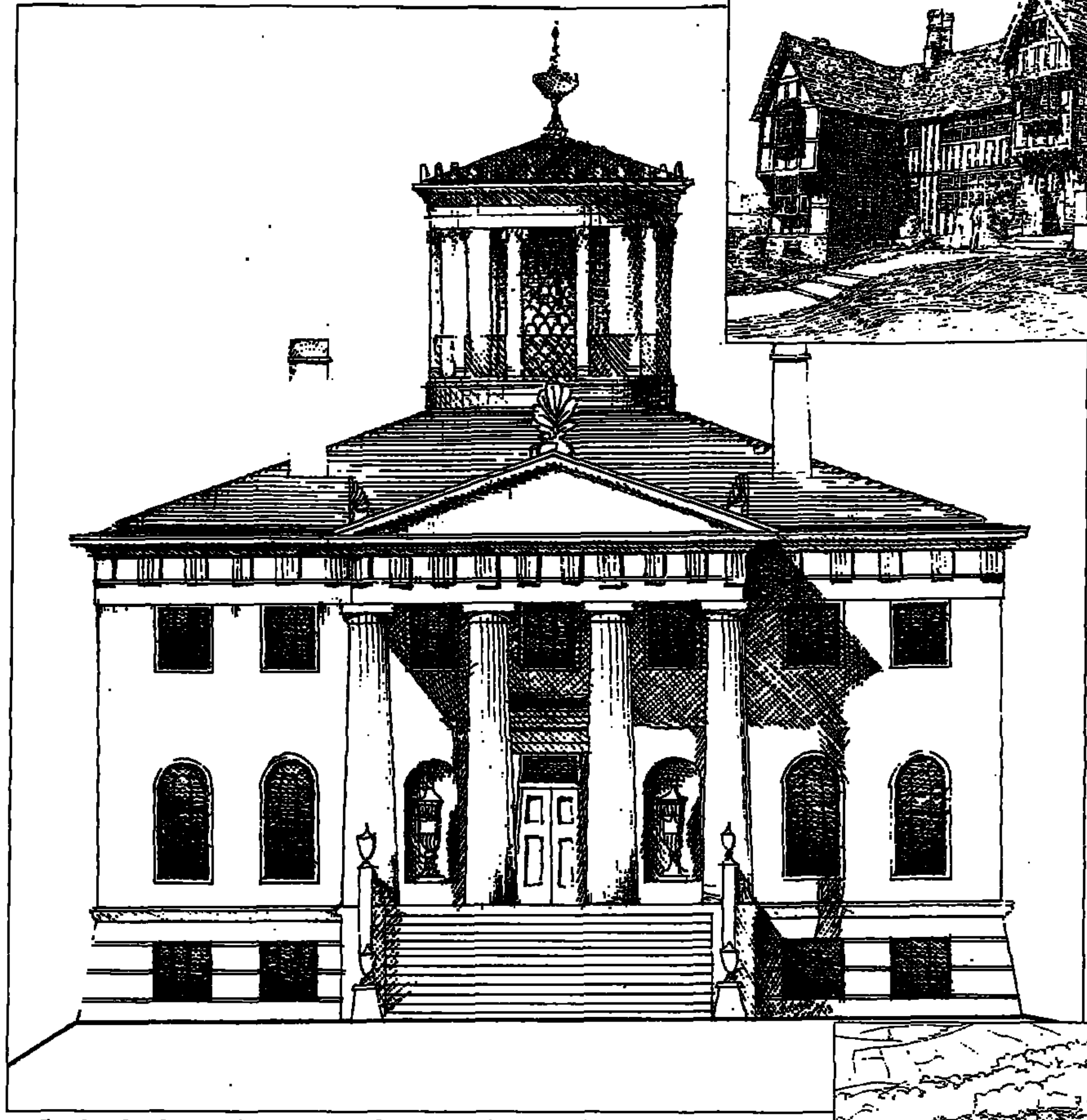
It will be up to local councillors to decide whether to grant planning permission for the mansions, which would have to be of "truly outstanding" design. But Mr Gummer is making sure there will be no blots on the landscape: he will have the final say.

The Times asked three architects what they could offer, given a free hand to design a new stately home. The place we suggested for our fantasy is the 1,400-acre Estcourt Park estate, near Tetbury, Gloucestershire, which has a drive of sweet chestnuts that leads nowhere, the handsome Cotswold mansion it once served having gone. But there is outline planning permission for a new manor on the old site. Our architects came up with three quite different manor houses.

CHRISTINE WEBB



The ground-floor plan of Robert Adam's Italianate manor



The glass-faced cupola forms the roof of a double-height central hall, allowing in light

CLASSICAL

ROBERT ADAM specialises in the classical style favoured by designers of grand houses in the Cotswolds. Because he has worked on projects for the Prince of Wales, whose Highgrove House estate borders Estcourt Park, he seemed a particularly apt choice to carry out our brief.

Of our three fantasies, his is the most likely to coincide with the wishes of Cotswold planners, who usually expect designs to fit in with the local character of the area. Yet, while his design might look conventional, there is more to it than meets the eye.

The building has a central, glass-faced rotunda which forms the roof of a double-height central hall, allowing light through to the heart of the building.

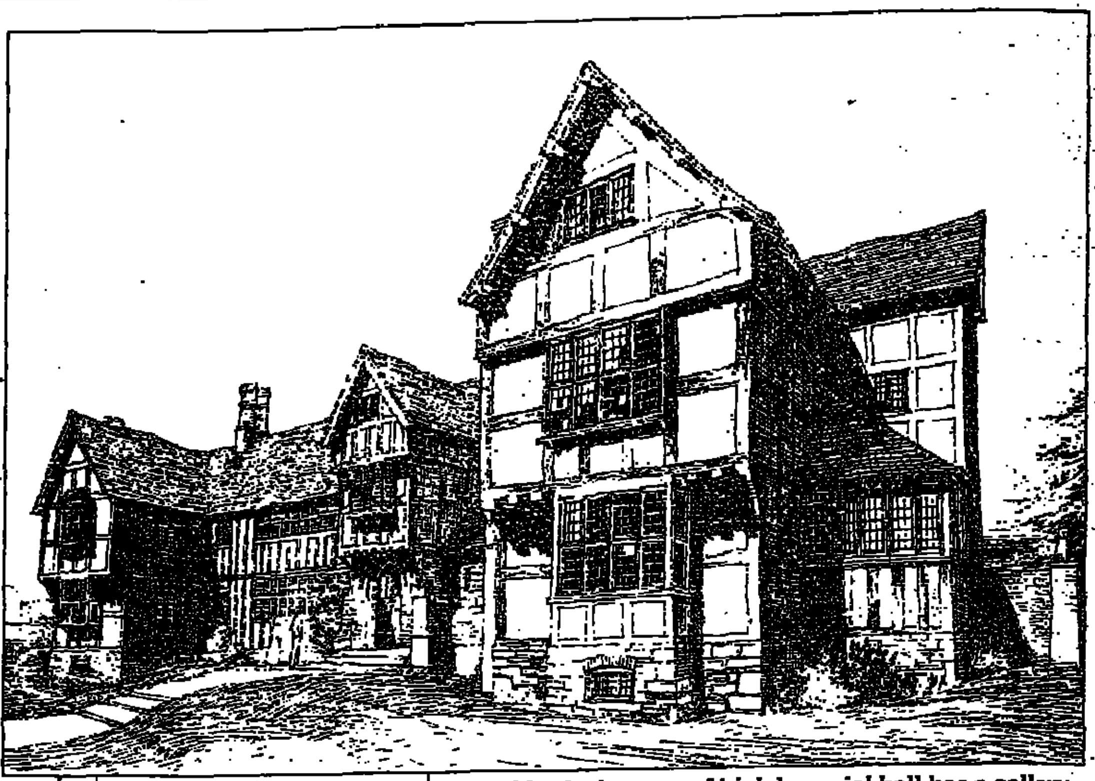
"The fun thing about it is that you're taking the type of design that was built by Palladio, an Italianate building type, and giving it a Greek twist," says Mr Adam, of Upper High Street, Winchester, Hampshire. "It shows how flexible the classical vocabulary can be. For example, the Greeks didn't use arches but I've used them on the windows and it somehow makes the building look more friendly. There are urns in wall niches, which are very Greek, and the cupola on the rotunda is Greek-inspired as well.

"At 4,000 square feet, the house is very usable and pleasant. One corner has a sitting room, breakfast room and pantry, with a dumb waiter to the kitchens. Above that is a bedroom suite that opens on to the balcony.

"Access to nearly all the rooms is off the central hall, so there are no corridors, and each room has a view of the landscape. There is a basement for the kitchens, and a separate garaging and staff living quarters.

"The whole building can be scaled up or down in size, because it is square, and a principle of classical design is that it is based on proportions relative to each other.

"Small buildings can be given scale by introducing full-height columns. This building is 40ft high. The principal rooms have 15ft-high ceilings, but if the building was two-thirds this size it would still look the same."



Inside, the huge, roof-high baronial hall has a gallery

ROMANTIC MEDIEVAL

THE ARCHITECT Border Oak, of Hereford, is best known for its romantic oak-framed houses using medieval construction techniques. So John Greene, its managing director, says his fantasy "embodies all that's good about an English manor house.

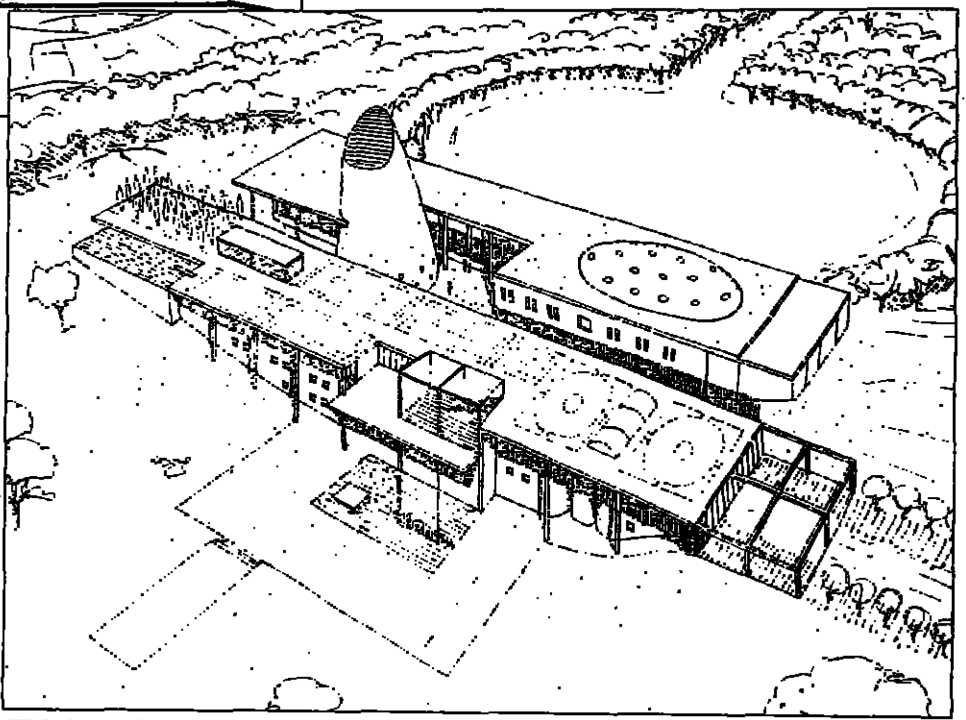
"In our fantasy building we'll demonstrate that oak can be used for fine structures. After all, oak is the only building material that hardens and improves with age; everything else deteriorates from the day you use it.

"Only best English oak will be used, so we'll need about 95 trees, which will be cut from the estate — replanting twice as many. The smaller branches would make wattle-and-daub panels. Clay from the estate would be fired to make bricks, and the hole left by the clay workings would be filled with water to form a lake. Windows would be double-glazed, with hand-made glass set in leaded panes, so that the windows will sparkle like a many-faceted diamond. Windows are like the eyes of a building: they're what gives a house its soul.

"It will be an honest house, more like the village squire than the landed gentry."

Mr Green described the interior: "There's a massive baronial hall which goes up to the roof, with a gallery and an inglenook fireplace. The library is panelled, and there's a billiards room and a trophy room, a wine cellar and a den.

"The cloister, off the west wing, leads to a folly, where you can open a door to a spiral staircase concealed in the central core. This takes you to the top of a hexagonal folly, and there you can compose sonnets or love stories while admiring the view."



This house has green technology and processes its own electricity, sewage and water

FUTURISTIC

THE PARTNERSHIP Baker-Brown McKay of Lewes, East Sussex, won the House of the Future competition in 1993 organised by the Royal Institution of British Architects. Its winning design was built at the 1994 Future World Exhibition at Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The partners now lecture on sustainable design at the University of Brighton, Sussex, so their imaginative house is futuristic and gives environmental considerations priority.

"Whoever owns this house will be wealthy enough to have a collection of art and antiquities, and will open up the galleries to the public," Duncan Baker-Brown says. "Landscape will be important to this person, who will plant the whole area with native trees to recreate the landscape as it used to be, though there would be a clearing for the house, which would be set in a natural dip.

"The northern, copper walls of the new manor will stretch like a curtain between the grass banks. Once inside you can pass through various layers dedicated to culture, nature, fun and recreation, including a virtual reality area where people 'travel the world', until you finally arrive in the private hub of the house, away from prying eyes.

"To one side of the kitchen are gardens supplying year-round organic produce. The main, formal gardens are on the roof of the house.

"Although the building is 14,000 square feet, it has the latest green technology and is a zero energy house — it will not be connected to mains electricity, because it creates its own power using photovoltaic panels; it processes its own sewage and collects and processes its own water.

"The dining room has a glass skylight to provide natural light, and there is a winter garden on the roof for year-round relaxation, plus a swimming pool.

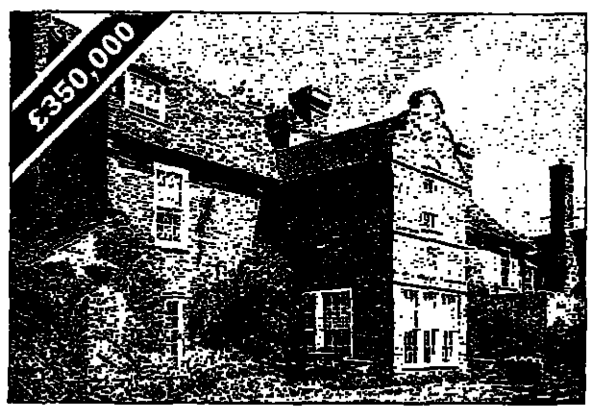
"Because it is such a long building it needs ventilation, which is provided naturally by the tower, which has a glass roof and acts as a solar chimney, drawing air out.

"Gardens demonstrate the ideas behind permaculture and forest gardening.

"Like a traditional country house, there are entertaining areas — we're not turning our backs on the fact that a country house is for inviting people to house parties, and for impressing people."

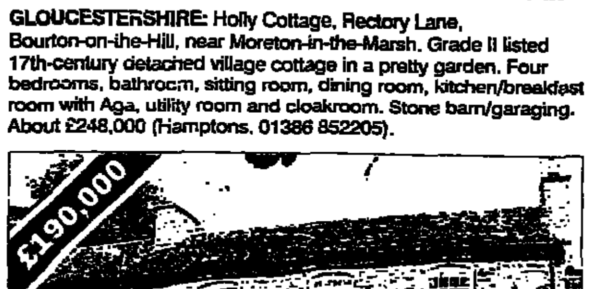
FOR **SALE**

VILLAGE HOUSES



KENT: Wingham Court, Wingham. Grade II* listed village house in a 1.7 acre walled garden with a range of period outbuildings. Six bedrooms, three bathrooms (two en-suite), four reception rooms, study, kitchen, domestic offices and two cellars. Self-contained one-bedroom annexe. About £350,000 (Strutt & Parker, 01227 451123).

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Holly Cottage, Rectory Lane, Bourton-on-the-Hill, near Moreton-in-the-Marsh. Grade II listed 17th-century detached village cottage in a pretty garden. Four bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room with Aga, utility room and cloakroom. Stone barn/garaging. About £248,000 (Hamptons, 01386 852205).



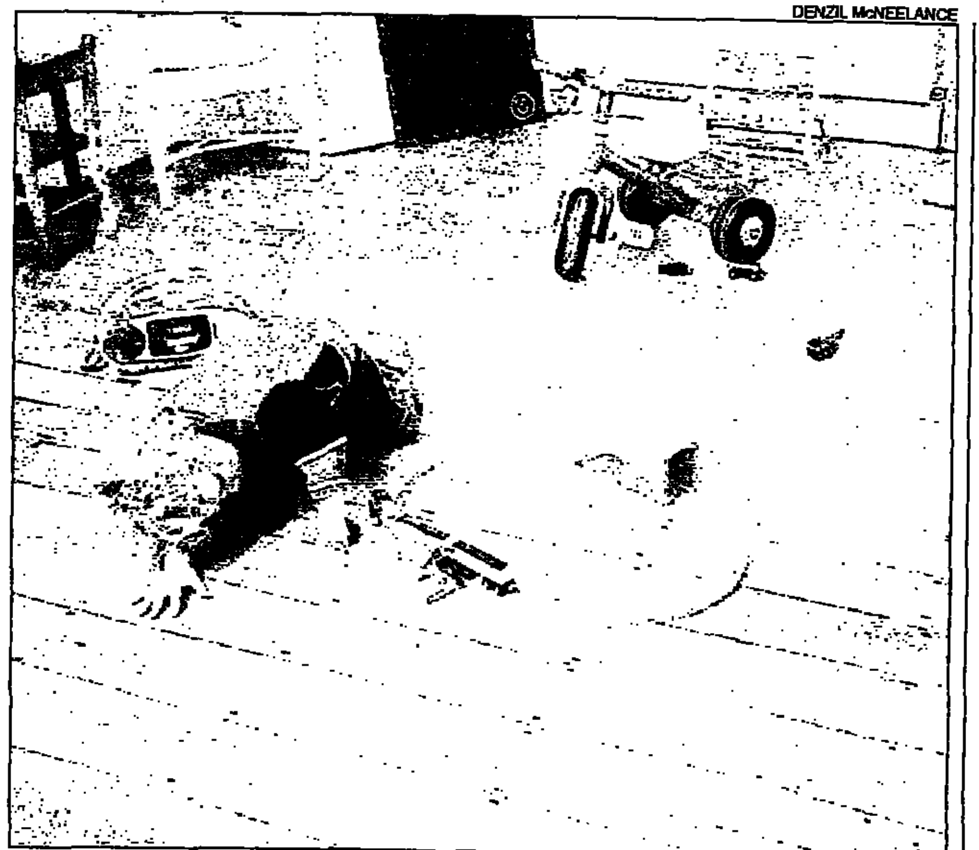
HEREFORDSHIRE: Hawkesbury, Kimbolton, Leominster. Refurbished 18th-century house in a third-of-an-acre garden, on the edge of a village. Four bedrooms, dressing room, two bathrooms, three reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room and cloakroom. Outbuildings and garage. About £190,000 (Knight Frank, 01432 273087).

CHERYL TAYLOR

Pine lovers' strip show

Cheryl Taylor on how to sand and varnish a pine floor the easy way

DENZIL McNEELANCE



Cheryl Taylor's son, Joseph, gets down to work on the newly stripped and varnished floor

One of the least expensive ways to transform an ordinary looking room is to expose a bit of wood. If you have pine lurking beneath layers of paint, or hidden under a shag-pile carpet, try uncovering it.

A quick burst of stripping and dipping will not only turn heads but also add value to your home. If you think it sounds like hard work, you may have been listening to die-hard pine enthusiasts who maintain there is no substitute for hand-stripping.

Those of us with better things to do simply nip down to the nearest tool hire shop for floor-sanding equipment. Armed with this formidable mechanical power, and a tin of "antique pine" coloured varnish, we can achieve a similar "real beauty" effect in a matter of hours.

Although this is the lazy way, operating a sanding machine does require some strength. The floor sander, which looks like a cross between a lawn mower and a vacuum cleaner, has a tendency to run away with you. An electricity circuit breaker should be used in case you run over the cable. Stout shoes are essential, because sanding your bare feet will do more than polish your toenails.

Before starting on a floor, make sure that all the nail or screw heads are hammered below the surface of the wood, otherwise you will end up tearing the sanding sheets.

Floorboards are sanded first with a coarse sanding sheet, and then with finer sheets until the required finish is obtained. A small, hand-held edging machine is then used to sand up to the skirting boards. A bit of elbow grease and conventional sandpaper are needed to get into the corners.

Finally, the floor surface should be dust-free and clean and dry before varnishing.

Many tool hire shops provide a package, comprising a floor sander and edger for about £30 to £40 for 24 hours — long enough to sand the average room. The charge for an additional day's hire is about £10 to £15. In addition, you will have to buy sanding sheets, which cost about £20 for an average room.

Widely spaced floorboards pose a few problems — unless you don't mind the wind howling through the gaps. You could always throw a rug over them on chilly days, or buy some filler to stop the gaps. Most DIY stores sell tubs of plastic wood, neutral or pine-tinted, costing about £6 for a quarter of a litre, which can be pushed into the spaces between the stripped boards using a flexible knife.

If the gaps are extensive, it is likely to be a long, messy job — and an expensive one. The end result may not be satisfactory — floorboards move as you walk on them and the filler may fall out.

The best solution is to lift the floorboards and move them closer together, adding an extra board to fill in the space left at the edge.

Pine-stripping by dipping, which can transform internal doors, cupboards, tables and chests, is inexpensive but a job best left to the specialists. Filling your bath with caustic soda is not recommended, especially when it costs as little as £12 to £15 to have a standard door dipped professionally.

Pine enthusiasts, of course, will complete the job and strip the door frames by hand. Those of us who have tried this, scraping away night after night using industrial amounts of paint stripper, prefer to leave the frames exactly as they are. You can, after all, have too much of a good thing.

PROPERTY **NEWS**

■ HOUSE prices are 8.5 per cent higher than this time last year, according to Nationwide. *Amanda Loose writes.* Rises have been fuelled by a lack of supply, with an increase of only 0.7 per cent last month. Nationwide reports that the average cost of a house is now £55,621 — £4,365 more than in February 1996.

■ WETHERBY Studio in Wetherby Place, South Kensington, London is for sale for £350,000. It has been home to actor Christopher Reeve and Tony Hicks, a former member of the Kinks. The unmodernised studio includes 20 sq ft of space with a vaulted ceiling and gallery, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. Contact Douglas & Gordon, 0171-225 1225.

■ ARABLE land prices in the eastern counties of Britain — from Lincolnshire to Essex — rose by 20 per cent last year, reports Strutt & Parker. The average price of land available with vacant possession rose to £2,675 per acre, with demand expected to remain high.

■ DEMAND continues to outstrip supply in the prime central London market, says the agent Aylesford, with many of last year's successful sellers finding themselves homeless as they compete with the increasing number of international buyers. Properties priced about £600,000 this time last year are now going for about £1 million and Aylesford fears it will have little to offer the annual influx of wealthy overseas buyers this summer.

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THE TIMES

AMIABLE professional people 35-65 sought by informal London group which wines, dines & laughs together regularly with aim of meeting new friends. Expenses shared. Box No 3698

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NEXUS Unattached? Want to meet new people and have places to go this spring? Then find out what Nexus members are doing in your area! (Parties, walks, holidays, etc.) Ring for the brochure. (012374) 71704, (0181) 367 6378, (0113) 2445186, (01869) 338801, (0141) 221 1090, (0181) 944 8629, (01286) 831599, (0121) 472 1968 or (01202) 730355. (Not a Dating Service or Marriage Bureau.)

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PLUMP PARTNERS National Dating Agency. If you are plump or prefer a plump partner ring 01352 715909.

RICHMOND DINING CLUB needs more attractive men to complement our lovely ladies. Ring now on 01483 414419

THE DINNER CLUB (Est.'86) Join UK's largest up-market singles dining club. Enjoy dining, dancing, holidays abroad, weekends away. Wanted: hosts to be appointed in new areas M'ship /Host enquiries 01244 548816

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UNATTACHED? Try a new way to meet people. Phone the Singles Club on 01438 721630 (24 hrs) for a free brochure.

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LADIES

AFFECTIONATE female, caring, attractive(Public School - 2 Degrees) WLTM n/s similar male 30 - 45 for fun, friendship/ romance and lively conversation. London/SE Bx 3630 ☎ ✍

AFFECTIONATE, attractive, fit girl(London),32 with SOH enjoys theatre, water sports, travel. If you're 30-38, sincere, genuine, tall, & N/S with GSOH, reply with photo to Box 3732 ☎ ✍

ALL Alone in sunny Dubai. English blonde rose (43) sexy, intelligent, charismatic business lady who loves life & laughter seeks goodlooking man 40-50 for fun, laughter & high jinks in the sun. Please Reply to Box No 3666 ✍

ANDOVER/Salisbury. 25 mile radius. The start of something special. Elite Introductions 07000 781 981 open 7 days

ARE you interesting & unattached? I am! Also a youthful 40, London based, independent professional with many pursuits but not obsessions WLTM similar to share a bottle of wine & see what happens next. Reply to Box 3716 ☎ ✍

APHRODITE seeks Adonis. Italianate goddess, own beautiful temple, stylish, accomplished, educated, creative & fun seeks tall, dark, handsome, fit & successful Adonis 30-45. London worshippers only. Send icon to Box No 3638 ☎ ✍

ARE you a creative charismatic man, 45-55, tall, slim, affluent, educated, N/S and honest? If so, an attractive sporty lady graduate would like to meet you. Cotswolds/Wilts/M4 corridor. Photo essential. Box No 3748 ✍

ATTRACTIVE, professional lady, 38, warm, intelligent, no ties. Loves travel, countryside, life in general WLTM special someone to share it all with. Hants/London. Box No 3751 ✍

BLACK, slim, beautiful lady, independent, well educated seeks handsome, sophisticated articulate, witty man 30-40s to share hill walking, working out, skiing, books & the arts. London/ Home Counties. Photo essential. Box No 3674 ☎ ✍

BRIGHTON & Sussex - The Executive Club at Brighton Marina 01273 818100

BRISTOL area. Meet someone very special now. Call Chris at Elite Introductions. Local office 0117 973 6663

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CAMBRIDGE lady professional, lively, cultured, musical 40's. Meeting her might change your life. Reply Box No 3238 ✍

LADIES

CALIFORNIA blonde, ex pat, 37, looking for more in life than work. Seek London based N/S to share hectic schedule, just as comfortable in Levis as black tie. Send me a photo & a letter & make me laugh. Box No 3688 ✍

CARING, elegant, attractive N/S prof lady, cultured & well educated. Adores sailing & cooking, National Trust, cinema. WLTM kind, gentle, considerate man with humour (50-60) W. Midlands based. Photo. Box 3720 ✍

CHARISMATIC, charming, educated, rugged 5.10+ real man in 40's sought by strong, desirable azure-eyed beauty, who is striking, creative, easy-going, in-touch & in central London. Preferring rugby to football obviously, you know your way around a gym, are broad/open-minded & not too serious! Well, travelled, appreciating European cinema, with a big heart & time for a new love of your life makes you near perfect. If ready for a combined mental, emotional & physical commitment, your recent photo & short scribble guarantees reply. Box No 3744 ✍

CHRISTIAN lady, attractive, young 50, widow, 2 children, WLTM, genuine, n/s gentleman similar age/interests: cultural, sporty, homeloving - Dorset. Plse reply with photo Box 3580 ✍

CLASSIC French beauty, prof lady late 30s 5'6, slim WLTM 6'+ BCBG/distinguished gentleman London/Paris Box No 3728 ☎ ✍

COUNTRY loving widow, tall, slim, attractive, happy, caring, outgoing. Cultural interests too. Cotswolds based. WLTM a gentleman, tall, 55+ to enjoy life with. Box No 3577 ✍

E.C. The Executive Club of St James's London, Brighton & York. 07000 499 8833

CREATIVE, artistic, slim, hazel eyed divorcee full of beans in danger of freeze-framing Ciaran Hinds - again. Is there a gentle soul (52-60) out there to share the gardening, a cultural life & a sense of the ridiculous. London/Southwest. Photo please. Box No. 3723 ☎ ✍

E LONDON/Essex one call to Elite Introductions opens the door to 100s of genuine partners Freecall 0500 497775: 7 days

ESHER and surrounding areas (KT/SM postcode). Why be alone when the phone call can put you in touch with gentlemen of like minds Call Elite Introductions 0181 547 2577

ESSEX Elite Introductions for prof/bus people: 7 days 9am - 9pm freephone 0800 854751

EXCEPTIONAL lady with warmth and spirit is looking for equally exceptional man 45-55 for laughter fun and romance. Must have genuine style and sophistication. London area. Reply to Box No 3486 ☎ ✍

FEMININE, slim, attractive, intelligent & loving lady, many interests including jazz, golf, painting, etc. Seeks established, outgoing 50+ gentleman, N/S with GSOH to share life. South Coast. Please Reply with photo to Box No 3747 ✍

FEMININE stylish woman seeks cultured, romantic 40+ man of integrity and broad outlook for lasting friendship. Bucks/Herts/Environs Bx 3708 ✍

FEMININE 57, 34, slim, attractive brunette, confident, sensuous, educated, sporty, seeks prof educated n/s man. Will travel. Photo plse Bx 3480 ☎ ✍

FRIEND & Lover 40-50ish for attractive N/S blonde, 5'6", GSOH. Learning tennis & Tai-chi, also appreciates romance, travel, philosophy, good food & recent photo of you. Richmond area. Reply to Box No 3602 ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

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LADIES

HAPPY, contented but looking for friendship, love from country living, upmarket, fiftyish fellow who enjoys farming and France. Area Somerset/Dorset. Please Reply to Box No 3764 ✍

GREEN! Dating our members will make your friends turn green, you can dine with top quality people, you require personality to to take it further E.C. 07000 499 8833

HERTFORDSHIRE - Happy intelligent lady 52 with variety of interests WLTM calm, sincere, intelligent, gentleman for possible caring & sharing. Please reply to Box No 3587 ✍

I AM a feminine, creative, pretty, prof 37, 5'7", long dark haired, big brown eyed, slender female, no-ties, WLTM perspective partner, tall, prof, to care and share. Essex based but distance is relative. Letter/photo essential please. Reply Box No 3595 ✍

IRISH Eyes Southern Ireland Attractive, successful widow, stylish petite blonde, a woman of substance, well travelled, WLTM tall attractive professional widower, 50-65 years. Must be gregarious, into food, music, horses. Accompanying photo will be answered. Replies only Southern Ireland. Please Reply to Box No 2906 ✍

"LIFE is never dull with you" friends say. Prof woman, divorced, fair hair, slim, attractive appearance sparkling, warm personality, widely travelled, varied interests incl The Arts, current affairs, philosophy, sometime golfer, seeks genuine charismatic businessman 55+ with compatible chemistry. Hants but flexible Bx 3530 ☎ ✍

LONDON based French lady, 50, very feminine, more a Degas than a Rembrandt, well travelled. "Joi de vivre", enjoys walks, opera, music, home lover. WLTM successful gentleman, warm personality, reliable, sociable, 55-60's for a meaningful relationship. Please Reply to Box No 3756 ✍

LONDON based 53, Italian, kind and classical music, theatre, travel, walks and all good things in life lover - looking for 53+ gentleman, caring, well educated, unattached, for relationship and to enjoy and share life and romance. Photo please. Reply to Box No 3658 ✍

LONDON & Enfield/Cambridge & E Anglia/Stevenage & all SG postcodes. Call Elite Introductions local office 0500 103410

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

LADIES

MIND'S EYE Who's in yours? You'll find her with Mind's Eye introductions! London/Kent prof? Call free:0800-435 922.

LOVELY, attractive Jewish, 40 something lady with GSOH likes classical music, cinema, seeks a fun, caring, unconventional man 45 - 55 North West London. Photo plse Close Encounters Reply Box 3695 ✍

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs Success after success. 100's of quality ladies. Call now for free details - Elite Introductions 0115 937 6104

NCLE/TYNE Romantic, very attractive petite brunette WLTM tall professional 50-60 gent to spend time doing things we both enjoy. Box No 3731 ☎ ✍

NOW the dust has settled, this attractive, intelligent, sensitive & successful N/S woman, positive & independent WLTM similar man (48-60) to start her life again. London/Surrey. Please reply with photo to Box 3734 ✍

OUTGOING, attractive, vivacious blonde 45, bright, warm, interested in people not politics, long walks, music, tennis & languages seeks like minded (tall) tender man. Letter + photo. Thames Valley Box No. 3608 ✍

PETITE professional lady who is outgoing, sociable, pragmatic and eternally optimistic. WLTM someone with a sense of humour, an enjoyment of life, who is kind and generous, and in their fifties. You are able to contain both my strengths and weaknesses and share some common interests. Mine include, theatre, books, music, sport, travel. Don't let the flowers be the only things that blossom this Spring. Kent based. Reply to Box No 3717 ✍

PETITE, attractive, Surrey-based lady who loves fun, the arts, sport and life. Seeks tall professional n/s man (45-55) to share it all. Photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 3512 ✍

RICHMOND, Hampton, Heathrow. Staines, Uxbridge (TW/UB) Don't be alone, meet someone special. Quality introductions Linda: Elite 0181 580 0028

SOPHISTICATED, successful, very slim, tall, attractive lady 34, homeloving, GSOH with varied interests looking for genuine uncomplicated, unpretentious professional male. Must love children & animals & have a love of life. South Coast. Photo ensures reply. Box 3683 ☎ ✍

LADIES

SOPHISTICATED, well-travelled, cultured, elegant Jewish lady seeks sophisticated, well-travelled, cultured elegant gentleman similar background, 50-65 for warm and lasting relationship. Photo plse. Box 3568 ✍

ST ALBANS, (AL) and Luton (LU) postcodes. Call Suzanne at your local Elite office on 01582 831831

THIS Jewish lady feels she has a lot to offer, looks, intelligence, personality & class & WLTM male equivalent 50-62 who also adores golf. London. Photo please. Reply to Box No 3676 ☎ ✍

SUSSEX, Kent and East Surrey Elite Introductions have local offices at Brighton, Croydon Redhill & Tunbridge Wells. Call us now and we'll explain how we can find the right partner for you. No pressure, no computer, just the important 'human touch' Claire 01883 744405/Jackie 01273 552292

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LONDON AND NATIONWIDE

LADIES

TALL, dark haired, slim, shapely, very attractive early 30's professional female seeks kind & attractive gentleman who is seeking love & that special relationship. Enjoys horseriding, tennis, music & current affairs. London/Home counties. Letter/ & photo essential. Box No 3655 ✍

UNPRETENTIOUS female, 41, slim, very attractive, genuine, intelligent but non-intellectual, not career minded but ambitious when necessary. Enjoys family, children, looking after people, live concerts, music, dancing, theatre, holidays WLTM similar male, emotionally mature. Northwest. Photo to Box 3709 ☎ ✍

VERY Attractive well travelled German lady, 32, with Italian appearance & temper WLTM an attractive, sporty, successful man, for a serious relationship. Please send photo. Reply to Box No 3397 ✍

VERY good looking, highly intelligent, top prof woman WLTM single 40+ successful and interesting male with GSOH & must be good kisser! Bx 3759 ☎ ✍

LADIES

VIVACIOUS, pretty blonde, young 43 single mum, n/s, almost not having that special person in her life. If you're tall, attractive inside and out, successful and romantic could it be you? Photo appreciated. N London. Please Reply to Box No 3631 ✍

WARM, caring, stylish, fun loving and romantic, well educated, slim and attractive lady of 50 who enjoys music, theatre, country walks, travel, wining and dining. Seeks sincere and kind male 50+ GSOH, please reply to Box No 3673 ✍

WELL Preserved! Social lady 83, (Doctors widow) blonde hair, green eyes, seriously looking for partner Reply Box 3634 ✍

WE promise you five top quality dates in 6 weeks if you wish E.C. who else?

WIDOW active attractive professional 70s retiring abroad shortly WLTM healthy wealthy widower. Box No 3680 ✍

WITHOUT E.C. where could you go to meet unattached people of quality? 07000 499 8833

WILTS-based, early 40's female copywriter. Wrinkle-free zone, curvy, VGSOH, caring WLTM similar NS creative male, late 30s - late 40s who's still wild at heart with no excess emotional baggage or facial hair. Please Reply to Box No 3750 ✍

WINE & photography are my hobbies. Will you teach me more? I'm attractive, slim, 5 6" blonde, prof woman (London) with interests also in music, eating out, sport, art, travelling, life in general. If you are a prof man, N/S 38-52, unattached who 'fits the picture', please reply with photo to Box 3703 ☎ ✍

WOULD you like to sail for 6 months in warm waters, ski in winter, enjoy walking, cooking, theatre with 6' fit & strong N/S gentleman? Are you 40-55 slim attractive adventurous lady who wants a loving long term relationship? Then we must meet. Do write with photo to Box No 3532 ✍

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GENTLEMEN

ACTIVE, creative widower, 6 ft. into sports, music, dining out, travel, graphics, kids, & dogs. WLTM lady N/S 40-50. Photo please. South. Box No 3671 ✍

ACTIVE retired professional man. Socialist. Seeks younger attractive lady for friendship, theatre, cinema, travel here and abroad, country walks and whatever. London Primrose Hill. Reply Box No 3757 ✍

GENTLEMEN

ADONIS - not quite, but looks good by candlelight. Prof man, 37, loves classical music and jazz, WLTM similar affectionate N/S girl, 25-40 or so, for dinners, concerts, theatre, romance. London. Photo appreciated. Reply to Box No 3694 ☎ ✍

ARTISTIC, attractive black male (28), London, seeks good looking independent professional female (23-39) with GSOH for friendship/relationship & inspiration. Photo. Box 3461 ✍

ARE you ready for a stampede of love & happiness? Fit, active, adoring prof man, seeking one special 40's lady to care for endlessly. SE based. Photo. Reply to Box No 3705 ✍

ANDOVER/Salisbury. 25 mile radius. The start of something special. Elite Introductions 07000 781 981 open 7 days

ARIES gentleman, 49, slim, 5'11, n/s, financially secure with varied interests, making a fresh start seeks independent lady able to commit to a full and lasting relationship. Photo very much appreciated - mine in return. P.S. no bad habits but prepared to learn! Devon based Please Reply to Box No 3687 ☎ ✍

ATHLETIC, tall slim 33 yr old professional (Muslim), enjoys good life & outdoors WLTM an articulate & educated female, 25-30 yrs, similar background for friendship & more. London based. Box No 3724 ☎ ✍

ARISTOCRATIC Charming Belgian lawyer (45) is looking for a lovely, intelligent, genuine lady. Photograph please. Reply to Box No 3489 ✍

ATHLETIC, attractive, successful businessman (SW 1) tall, early forties. Looking for special lady with a great figure & smile to match. London based. Photo very much appreciated. Reply to Box No. 3657 ✍

AUSTRALIAN man (39), Derby area seeks marriage partner, any age. Reply to Box No 3736 ✍

BRIGHTON & Sussex - The Executive Club at Brighton Marina 01273 818100

BIG-HEARTED and soulful, attractive, tall, unconventional 50 year old writer and spiritual seminar leader. Cambridge educated, humorous, bright, loves dining out, art, beauty, travelling fast. Looking for soul buddy to share spiritual journey with. Ideally, she'll be under 44, bright, slim, attractive, soulful and adventurous in spirit. Photo please. London/Glos Reply Box 3653 ☎ ✍

BRISTOL area. Meet someone very special now. Call Chris at Elite Introductions. Local office 0117 973 6663

GENTLEMEN

BROMLEY/SE London/Kent. Looking for that special person? Why make 100 calls when one will do. Call Elite Introductions 0181 658 7576

COMPANY director (39) handsome, slim, fit, GSOH, financially secure, sensitive & self aware, ready for commitment. Restlessly seeking a warm, very attractive, stylish, slim, intelligent lady 30-35 to laugh at life's ups & downs with. Cotswolds based. Please reply with photo to Box No 3726 ☎ ✍

CHRISTIAN airline pilot, 43, well travelled, kind, sincere, affectionate, generous, solvent, N/S, seeks stylish, single blonde/brunette lady, long haired, slim, 40ish. Midlands if poss. Photo please to Box No 3642 ☎ ✍

E.C. The Executive Club of St James's, London: Brighton & York. 07000 499 8833

CREATIVE, learned gentleman, aspiring writer, 48, 5'6, not unattractive, prof, lots to offer. Considerate, enjoys walking, TV and cooking, seeks similar female 37+ for lasting relationship. Manchester area. Please Reply to Box No 3515 ✍

DOCTOR, 30, NS, Oxford based, well travelled, GSOH, varied interests, WLTM like minded woman for friendship, socialising and possibly romance. Please Reply to Box No 3679 ✍

DOCTOR, tall, good looking and fun seeks attractive intelligent woman under 32 with whom to enjoy this Planet. London Please Reply to Box No 3727 ☎ ✍

EASY-GOING, professional guy, 37 enjoys arts, travel, food, friends WLTM similar London female. Reply to Box No 3735 ✍

ESHER and surrounding areas (KT postcode). Why be alone when one phone call can put you in touch with discerning ladies of like minds. Call Elite Introductions 0181 547 2577

E LONDON/Essex one call to Elite Introductions opens the door to 100s of genuine partners Freecall 0500 497775: 7 days

EVERYTHING but the girl - caring, fit, active, well travelled, good looking, successful, N/S prof. male 35 seeks attractive fun loving partner. Lon/Mids/S. Coast. Photo plse. Box No 3742 ☎ ✍

ESSEX Elite Introductions for prof/bus people: 7 days 9am - 9pm freephone 0800 854751

EXTREMELY affluent, Oxford educated company director, cultural tastes, very relaxed, 40's, 5'9", slim, fit, no offspring, seeks glamorous lady (no children) 28-45 for marriage. I live in Mayfair but will willingly travel anywhere. Must appreciate fine food and wine. Photo please. Box 3470 ✍

FLORIDIAN I'm 41, tall, fit, humorous & considered handsome. Seeking an attractive, n/s woman 35 or younger that would enjoy a cross cultural experience & the sun & fun of Florida's oceanfront. Please Reply to Box No 3564 ✍

GENTLEMAN, 48, single, tall, fit, active, N/S, not rich but financially secure, presently based NW England, loves all things American. Looking for similar lady in USA to care for in new life Stateside. Interesting letter & photo ensures same. Reply to Box No 3644 ✍

HANDSOME, (very), dark, tall, sporty, highly successful solvent man, 35, WLTM very pretty intelligent lady, slim, tall, high achiever, under 35. Photos most appreciated. London/Beds Bx 3632 ☎ ✍

INTERNATIONAL businessman living in central London and working in the South of France, Los Angeles and Singapore is looking for that special girl to share his good life. I am free, mature and sophisticated, I love travel, theatre, restaurants and clubs. You must be outgoing and very attractive & under 32. Photo and phone number essential please. Reply to Box No 3730 ✍

MIND'S EYE Who's in yours? You'll find him with Mind's Eye introductions! London/Kent prof? Call free:0800-435 922.

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Does the explosion of chef heroes in Japanese comics mean that a breed of New Man is emerging?

Comic relief meets nouveau cuisine

That Japanese of all ages are hooked on comics has not escaped the notice — and the sneers — of some Westerners who would not be seen dead carrying something so vulgar. But even visitors forewarned about the national *manga* (comic books) mania can be startled by the sight of grown men in trains poring over comic strips that drip with bondage, rape and mutilation.

Yet there is a lot more to manga than sex and violence. New genres of comics are emerging constantly, reflecting the new trends and preoccupations of Japanese society. There is, for example, an increasingly popular variety called the "cuisine comic", featuring chefs and gourmets as the unlikely heroes. Their goal in life is the pursuit of the ultimate in food and cooking, and this obsession lands them in some weird and wonderful adventures.

Japanese comics are in a class of their own. No other country has anything to match their sheer diversity, skilful artwork and mountainous sales. The Japanese soak up 1.2 billion comic books (many as thick as telephone directories) each year — about 30 per cent of the nation's total output of magazines and books.

More than 1,000 titles (the majority appear monthly or weekly) cover every imaginable subject, with many speciality comics devoted solely to dramas centring on golf, child-rearing and, most recently, *oldies in retirement — a reflection of* Japan's rapidly ageing society.

Manga are devoured by Japanese of all age and social groups. Take one of those packed commuter trains. One passenger, with grey sideboards, perhaps on his way to work in a bank or government ministry, is immersed in sex-packed *Bonanza*.

Sitting alongside him is a spotty teenager in black school uniform lapping up the adventures of baseball heroes and ingenious schoolboys in *Weekly Shonen Jump*, the bestselling comic magazine with a five million circulation ("read by boys from 16 to 60", according to the publishers). A slender young woman squashed in the corner by the door is reading the popular twice-monthly comic magazine *You*, a bizarre mix of domestic dramas and sex stories all written by women.

"It's impossible to understand modern Japanese society properly without studying manga," says Minobu Shiozawa, a writer and commentator. "They mirror society and the way it changes."

The mainstays of comics for women, for example, have traditionally been European aristocrats, sportswomen, homosexual boys and bisexual princes: all non-threatening species. The curiously titled *Liberal White*, for example, is full of stories about effeminate male doctors' love affairs. But recent years have seen a boom in women's comics about the struggle to carve out a career in a male-dominated world. Stories about how women professionals outwit their male rivals in the office are highly popular, and this mirrors the trend of modern Japanese women to forsake the kitchen sink for a career.

Frederick Schodt, author of *The World of Japanese Comics*, maintains that manga perform a useful social function. "They provide a brilliant fantasy release in a crowded, tightly controlled society," he says. "Immersed in a comic book, the average salaried worker is allowed a brief escape from everyday life where a man is no more than a cog in a vast, well-oiled machine." However, the great unknown is how readers, and especially teenagers, are influenced by the barrage of pornography. After all, some magazines specialise in stories about women being tied up and tortured, and scenes of rape even creep into many general interest comics.

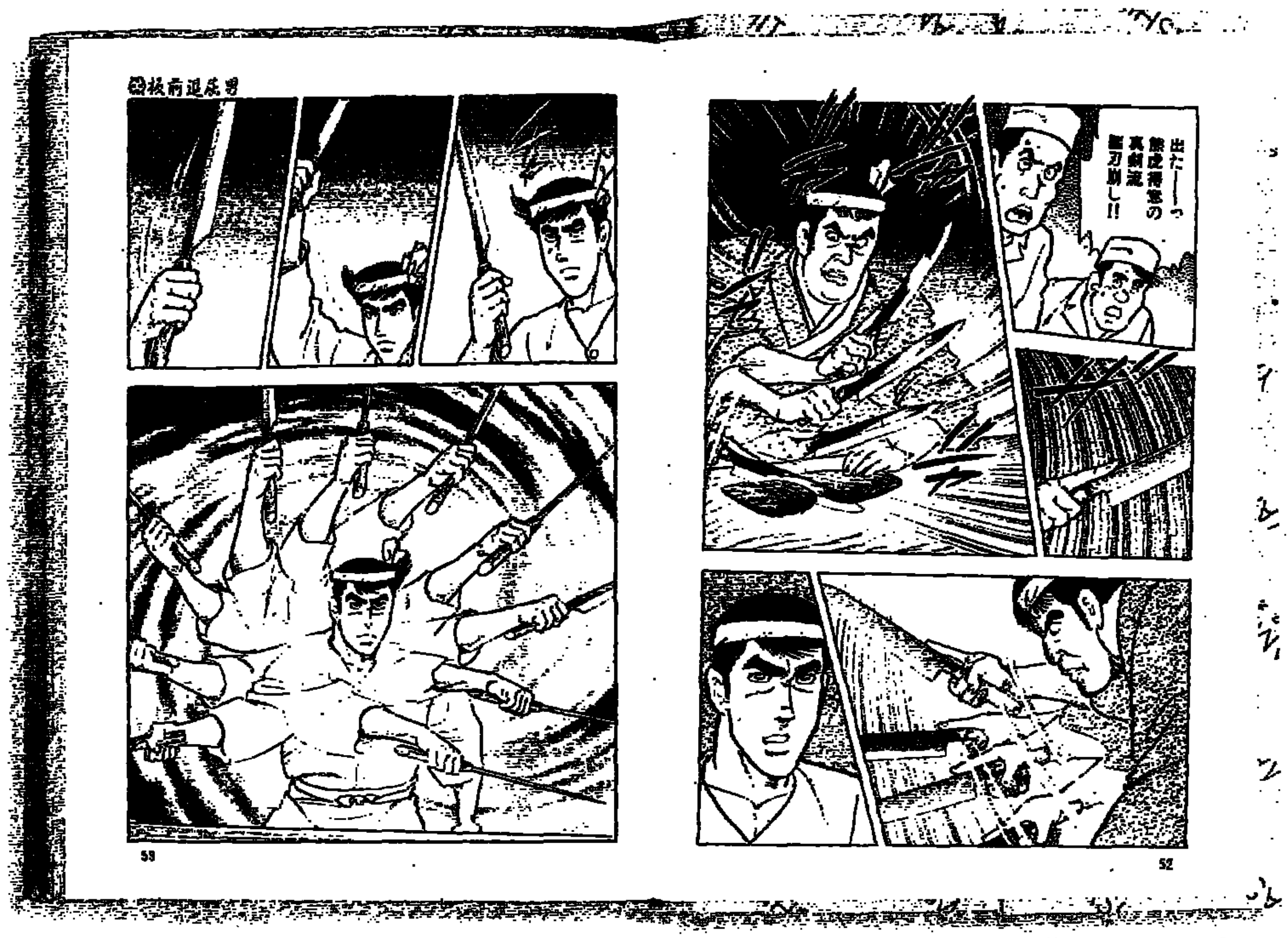
Japan has one of the lowest levels of violent crime among industrialised nations, but it is widely acknowledged that the low rape figures mask a vast number of cases that go unreported. Tokyo's crowded trains are notorious for the huge number of incidents of *chikan* — the brazen molesting of women — which is the sort of abuse glorified in many popular comic books.

It is a relief to report that millions of men are turning to "cuisine comics" for less gory entertainment.

Japanese men who have never buttered a slice of bread are among the most ardent fans. The two biggest stars of this genre are Shota, the sushi-master in the comic series *Shota's Sushi*, and trainee chef Ryosuke Kure, the protagonist of *Wanderer With a Kitchen Knife*. These cooks are no cissies. They are ruthless in their desire to produce state-of-the-art fried carp or a spring roll of heavenly succulence. They wield their fearsome sashimi knives with the deadly precision of samurai swordsmen, but fortunately only to eviscerate a sea-bream or cut a puffer fish into slices so thin that you can see through them.

Japanese are fond of such manga, which blend fantasy with reality, entertainment with education. One such is *Oishimbo* (*The Gourmet*), which sells up to two million copies.

'The comic books mirror our society and the way it changes'



Here's one I prepared earlier: cuisine comics have been cashing in on a gourmet boom in Japan with heroes like samurai swordsmen

Shiro Yamaoka, the central figure, is a "food journalist" whose life's work is to track down the ultimate epicurean sensation. Each issue delights the reader with new, delectable and sometimes nauseous creations such as a vividly drawn recipe comic on cooking brains fried in lemon butter sauce.

The half-dozen food comics are cashing in on the "gourmet boom" which has spawned restaurants offering everything from Ethiopian to Tibetan food. They also reflect a revival of pride in Japan's own cuisine, which may be increasingly popular in Britain and America, but is scorned by many younger Japanese in favour of McDonald's and Pizza Hut. However, there is no evidence as yet that men are emulating the heroic chefs and gourmets by venturing into the kitchen, regarded strictly as the bailiwick of the woman in Japan.

"I boil water for pot noodles when I get home because I'm too tired to do anything else," says Jiro Ikehashi, a 25-year-old laboratory assistant who is still single. "Of course I'd like to make one of Shiro's fantastic meals, but I always get back late and would never have the time."

Achieving the sublime meal is perhaps the least important element of these exploits. The common thread is the religious dedication with which the protagonists pursue their goal.

The Japanese love affair with manga is not all that difficult to understand. Comic artists are in a class of their own, creating cinematic effects like zoom shots, varying camera angles and fade-ins. One peculiarity of the artwork is the size of the characters' eyes. Illustrators have discovered that big round eyes like those of Westerners have the greatest appeal to Japanese comic book fans. The frames even come with a "sound track" of special words representing sounds: such as "zuruzuru" for noodles being slurped, and "shashha" for swishing knives. Comic books have also enriched the language with the sound of silence — "shiin".

Even people of highbrow tastes, who openly dismiss comic books as infantile, often get hooked when they start flicking through the pages — as an elderly professor teaching at Tokyo's prestigious Waseda University sheepishly confided to me.

ROBERT WHYMANT

A VET WRITES

Q **We have just acquired a beagle called Thumper from a rescue home. He's settled down very well and is fairly obedient, but pulls very hard on the lead. Would a choke collar help, or would a harness be better?**

A Beagles are not the brightest of dogs and Thumper might be very old before he starts to realise he is strangling himself by pulling while on a choke collar and he could damage his throat in the process. A harness would help Thumper to pull more efficiently. Try a Halti, which is a dog-adapted version of the halter used for horses and cattle for hundreds of years. The lead is attached to the Halti beneath the dog's chin, so every time he pulls, his head has to turn to one side. And he can't pull if his neck is bent. Many pet shops stock them or phone the Company of Animals on 01932 566696.

Q **Our one-year-old West Highland White terrier has been lame in her right back leg for two months. The vet diagnosed Perthe's disease. What is this and what is the cause and prospects?**

A Perthe's disease is an abnormality of the hip. Something unknown interferes with the blood supply to the head of the femur. It becomes malformed and misshapen. The hip doesn't work properly, arthritis develops, and the dog is lame. There seems to be an inherited predisposition to this problem. Only the smaller breeds of dogs are affected. Surgical removal of the femoral head is the usual long-term remedy. In the majority of cases this stops the pain and within a few weeks the dog can gallop about without any difficulty, although he may not win a 100-yard sprint.

Q **My friend has two budgerigars and one of them perches on one leg. She says the vet had diagnosed gout. Was he serious? Do birds get gout?**

A Yes, usually in the toe joints. White patches, which are deposits of urate crystals, can be seen on the bottom of the foot. It's a painful condition and treatment isn't very effective. The bird can be made more comfortable by putting a small piece of turf on the floor of the cage so he can rest his bad foot on a soft surface.

JAMES ALLCOCK

● *Readers should write to: The Times Vet, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.*

CHRIS HARRIS

Hazel Anscombe with Trixie who has an infection

No more help for Humphrey?

Blue Cross, the charity that treats thousands of pets annually, faces a cash crisis in its centenary year

There were 17 people with sick pets in the waiting room when I arrived at the Blue Cross Animal Care charity one Thursday morning recently. The notice that greeted us said: "Please do not ask us where you are in the queue. It will not get you seen any quicker and it slows us down. We are very busy. Please be patient."

Later this month, on March 19, the Queen will visit the centre as its centenary patron. The charity needs to raise £2.7 million in its centenary year or face closure, something that has never happened, not even during the blitz.

The charity was founded in 1897 as Our Dumb Friends' League and made an early impact as a radical campaigning charity fighting for better conditions for working horses. In 1898 it began campaigning against crabs and lobsters being boiled alive and it was also very active during the First World War saving horses injured on the battlefields.

Today, with a staff of about 50, including 30 nurses and nine vets, the centre behind Victoria Station provides care for the pets of those too poor to afford a vet's fees (they are asked to make a donation), and campaigns to improve conditions for animals in transit for slaughter. In 1992 it became the first animal charity to employ an animal behaviourist to help owners of problem pets.

There have been famous visitors to the hospital. Humphrey, the Downing Street cat, wandered in, unrecognised, and was treated like any other stray. He was well on his way to being found a loving home before somebody recognised him as Westminster's top cat and returned him.

Buster, Roy Hattersley's Staffordshire bull terrier, proved one of the more difficult customers on animal behaviourist Steve Collis's private client list. At the start of his treatment, he slipped his leash while Mr Hattersley was walking him and dispatched a Canada goose in St James's Park. Mr Collis is persevering with Buster.

The charity is situated in Westminster and its cash crisis is apparent in the condition of the building. Paint flakes from the walls. Missing ceiling tiles expose decrepit wiring and bits of ceiling flutter down into the operating theatre. Masonry above the almoner's office crumbles to the pavement and the sparsely-stocked library is used as overflow accommodation for pets.

There are days when the centre is so busy you have to skirt around animals recovering in the corridors because there is no space anywhere else. And sometimes animals needing non-intrusive surgery have to be hundled from the operating table on to the floor to make way for the next case.

Anabel Wilson, the charity's full-time fundraiser, gave me the guided tour of everything the Queen will see. It is not for the squeamish and it helps if you are a hardened fan of the surgeons in M*A*S*H.

With the operating theatre so cramped, the surgeon barely had room to turn around. Ms Wilson said: "Like everywhere else here we don't have enough space. It's quiet today, but sometimes we can have one animal being operated on, another recovering from anaesthetic on the only other table in the room and another making do with the floor. The staff are too busy to notice how bad things are."

Room has been made for an emergency overflow operating theatre by using the boardroom. "The board now meets in the depths of an outbuilding underneath our offices."

Laboratory manager Stuart Broadfoot showed me creaking equipment which the Blue Cross has been using since the hospital was last refurbished more than 30 years ago — and much of this was bought second hand from NHS hospitals. "Some of it is practically unserviceable," he said. "Parts aren't available anymore. If it breaks down — that's it. That tissue machine there is 33 years old and on its last legs. It is a vital part of the process of analysing biopsies to discover if they are malignant. We need a new one but it will cost about £6,000."

Ms Wilson said: "For years, everybody has been working against time, overcoming daunting conditions and worn-out equipment. Now time is running out. There's going to be no attempt to tart things up for the Queen. She is aware of our situation and that's what she wants to see."

JACK CROSSLEY

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'It's not that I long to fall into the embrace of an all-knowing deity: a giant Daddy figure in the sky. But I do envy the serenity of believers'

It all started with a didgeridoo

LIFE AND SOUL

GINNY DOUGARY

His name was Bear. In the clinical, brightly lit setting of the art gallery, he looked incongruous and slightly scary. He was not an Aborigine or black or even Australian, although he affected to be all three. His face was painted to resemble a landscape of inky planes with boundary lines of white dots. His hair was clotted with white clay. Whatever else he could not be or do — dig up a witchetty grub, lay claim to the secrets of of Dreamtime — Bear knew how to play his didgeridoo.

He was sitting barefoot and crosslegged, gazing up at one of the Aboriginal paintings on the gallery wall and playing his amazing instrument. From deep in his wooden tube, Bear was able to summon the sounds of kookaburras, dingos and kangaroos hopping through the bush. Sometimes the creatures resisted him. "I wasn't concentrating hard enough," he explained. "I didn't visualise it properly."

Our younger son thought Bear was the business. Our older son was transfixed. In fact, all the children who had been dragged around by their parents to see this boring old art stuff on a Saturday afternoon found Bear and his cherrywood tubes — hollowed out by termites in Australia's red heart — as compelling as the children of Hamelin found the Pied Piper.

Most of the adults were as dumbstruck as the children. My husband volunteered himself for an impromptu "healing session". I could feel my toes curling with embarrassment as the crowd gathered to witness the spectacle of one grown man, lying on the floor, being tickled by another grown man with a big stick. My husband emerged from the experience with a beatific smile on his face, and I tried not to pretend that I didn't know him.

Cynicism is only part of my problem. Like a puritan with a decadent streak, I scoff at the very thing that attracts me. I am both drawn and repelled by any open display of communication with the unknown. The rather half-hearted Anglicanism of my upbringing has long since lapsed, and nothing has yet replaced it. A colleague of mine and I used to bemoan our Godless state. We still phone each other from time to time and inquire after our "spiritual desert". It's not that I really feel that life is arid or that I long to fall into the embrace of an all-seeing, all-knowing deity: a giant Daddy figure in the sky. But I do envy the serenity and certainty of true believers.

In my circle, only one couple has any kind of spiritual life — a form of Japanese Buddhism which they have been following for almost 20 years. I know no Bible readers and the churchgoers are motivated by their desire to get their children into the church primary school. (Although one or two of them have said how much they now look forward to that oasis of calm in a hectic life.) Conventional Christianity — as a deeply held faith — seems so rare today that it is almost exotic. Even politicians — hardly the least cynical of people — seem to have turned their backs on old-style religion in favour of spiritual mentors: the Clintons have Deepak Chopra, while Tony Blair has his Australian teacher-priest, Peter Thomson.

In recent decades there have been so many false gods and gurus — from Bhagwan Rajneesh to Werner Erhard to last year's fallen messiah, the raver Reverend Chris Brain — all competing to win the souls and salaries of people who are desperate to believe in something, as long as it comes in an unorthodox package.

Est, Exegesis, Insight ... there was a time in the mid-Seventies when you couldn't go to a party without meeting someone who had forked out 200 quid for a weekend of self-discovery. Instant Enlightenment — as one exposé documentary called it — plus VAT.

I remember one party (and I only twigged half-way through) which was thrown by Est initiates to work on their friends to join the organisation. Several of our hosts — all attractive, confident young men and women — had Firsts from Oxford. But then brains and privilege do not eradicate the need for belief — however bogus or misguided a form it takes.

Music or landscape can fill me with a sense of awe which is akin, I am sure, to other people's spiritual bliss. The closest I have felt to this state was in an empty creek near Alice Springs. The red, humming earth and the blaze of blue sky, preternaturally vivid, filled the senses: at a deeper level, it was like being pierced by an ancient, mysterious energy.

So when Bear played his didgeridoo, I was reminded for a brief moment of that sensation of beauty and otherworldiness, before my shutters came down. In the car home, I muttered about Bear — "Bear", for goodness sake — and all his nonsense about having to "visualise" his animals in order to bring them to life.

"Mum," my oldest son said, in slightly pitying tones, "that's just because you're a typical grown-up, and grown-ups have forgotten how to have fun."

What will my parents say?

Breaking the news of your sexuality to your parents can have devastating consequences, says **Judy Goodkin**

ALAN WELLER

Gaby Rolf (right) was thrown out of home when she revealed she was a lesbian. Rachel Armstrong (left) received a more sympathetic reaction

Before Sally Jones spoke the words guaranteed to sink the stoutest parental heart — "Sit down mum and dad, there's something I've got to tell you ..." — she went up to her bedroom and decided which of her belongings she would take with her when they kicked her out.

She knew the stakes were high yet, at 19, after several years spent covering her tracks, Sally felt unable to continue concealing the fact that she did not share the same sexual identity as her parents. "I have always been very close to my mum and dad, that's why I didn't want there to be any no-go areas between us. But my friends warned me: 'Expect the worst; you might lose them.'"

The news that the child you raised in your own image, the embodiment of your hopes and dreams, aligns themself with an alternative sexuality can feel like a catastrophe. "Don't tell your father, it will kill him" is a typical response and, with many parents reacting to the revelation as they would to a death, the threat of rejection is real. But when a child does not fulfil the expectations you have set for them, do you revise those expectations or drop the child?

Last year the London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard received 4,500 "coming out" calls from young gay people seeking advice on the right way to break the news to their families; only a minority of cases will have gone on to achieve an unequivocally positive reception.

Take Gaby Rolf, now 34, who informed her father at 17 that she was likely to appear on the *Nine O'clock News* following her noisy arrest at a gay demonstration outside Downing Street earlier that day. His first question was: "What were you doing with all those sick people?" When she replied that she was one, he told her to get out and not bother coming back.

With her parents divorced and her mother an alcoholic, Gaby had nowhere to run. "I was desperate, confused, completely isolated. I didn't know any other gay people and there were fewer networks then than there are today, so I just kept thinking I don't fit in, I'm not how I'm supposed to be. I seriously considered suicide on more than one occasion. But I had a fantasy that if one day I had enough money I would buy a row of houses where young gay people could live together safely." Gaby, now a social worker, doubts that she will ever see her father again.

Emma Healey, author of *Lesbian Sex Wars*, is a former employee of the Albert Kennedy Trust, a lesbian and gay charity set up to support young people at risk of being made homeless because they are gay, while working towards family reconciliation wherever possible. She believes that young gay people often mistakenly believe that telling their parents will be simple.

> When I finally said 'Mum, I'm a lesbian' all she could reply was 'We've grown three pounds of tomatoes'

"Programmes like *EastEnders* make coming out look incredibly easy — it isn't. I was a politically active lesbian involved in the campaign against Section 28 and I still hadn't come out to my parents. But it's wrong to imagine that living in the closet is comfortable. The truth is that it feels pretty awful having a whole side of your life that you can't share. You should be able to talk to your family about falling in love."

Elation drove Rachel Armstrong to rush in unprepared and break the news to her father. "After a difficult and confusing adolescence, I was 17 and having a really good time. It felt as though I had just discovered a whole new side of myself. I was so pleased that I even gave a teen magazine an interview all about being a newly out young lesbian. That gave me the prompt I needed to able to say 'Dad, in case you're thinking of buying a copy of *Just Seventeen*, don't be shocked when you find me in it.'"

Now 22, she still laughs at her father's reaction. "Dad finds women beautiful, so he understood. Besides, he admitted that it would be terribly boring for all his children to turn out straight."

Her mother took it less well. "When I finally said 'Mum, I'm a lesbian' all she could reply was 'We've grown three pounds of tomatoes and I've just weighed the marrows and we've got such large ones this year'. She still avoids the subject, but then I don't know whether I would talk to her about boyfriends either if I had them."

Rachel's stepmother Tara — whose views are shared by Rachel's father — believes their overriding concern was for her happiness. "Goodness knows there are enough heterosexual relationships that are destructive, abusive and cruel. When she brought her lovers down to meet us we saw that she was flowering, and that's what matters most.

"Her father absolutely adores women and was so glad when he thought that no hairy, smelly man would be getting his paws all over his lovely Rachel. We admire her for showing us that she had the courage of her convictions. After all, she was not to know which way it would go."

Rachel and Gaby's experiences represent opposite ends of the spectrum; the majority fall somewhere in between. Most, like Sally Jones, will have to settle for a compromise. "After the tears subsided, my parents said that, in time, they could adjust to the fact that I would never marry or produce grandchildren on condition that I did not tell my sister until she had finished her A levels and that I kept the news from my grandmother.

"I didn't like the idea at first, but I knew my gran would feel extremely ashamed and constantly anxious that her friends might find out."

Ms Healey has seen enough bewilderment among parents and children to appreciate the complexity on both sides. "Kids want a lot from their parents and almost demand that they see things as they do.

"It's very easy for a child to turn their back and say 'You are rejecting me so I'll reject you'. In time, bridges can be built, but often young people don't have much time. Children must accept that their parents' views were formed in a different generation.

"My parents couldn't help seeing my sexuality as a recipe for a life of unhappiness, misery and failure — that's how it was in their day. It is often hard for parents to see that in fact you can lead a rational, sensible, intelligent life *and* be a lesbian."

- *The Albert Kennedy Trust: 0161-953 4059*
- *London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard: 0171-837 7324*
- *Parents' Friend national telephone helpline for parents with lesbian, gay and bisexual offspring: 01132 674627.*

Ruth Gledhill takes the motorway to the gentler sufferings of the Pilgrim's Way

So that's where our pulpit went

IN THE loft of the tower of this church, an aged tambourine is stored, for inspection by interested visitors. This is not some ironic epitaph to the happy-clappy days of the 1980s but a relic from the 1800s when it was used to accompany hymns. The tambourine went out of use when the church acquired its barrel organ in the last century — and heaven help any vicar who attempts to reintroduce it here: the church is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and until the Reformation, the substantial house next door was the country manor of the Bishops of Rochester.

We sat in enchanting box pews at the tiny, Norman parish church of Trottiscliffe. Peter and Barbara Whiteland, a rosy-cheeked couple celebrating their ruby wedding anniversary, sat devotedly near the front. Behind them sat their daughter, two grandchildren and other family members.

Above us towered a formidable pulpit, which was originally in Westminster Abbey and, somewhat to the surprise of the Dean and Chapter, who had taken it down for the coronation of George IV and failed to re-erect it, reappeared at Trottiscliffe in 1824.

The village stands on the Pilgrim's Way in Kent, and parishioners are being asked to accommodate some of the hundreds of pilgrims who will take part in the 1,400th celebrations of St Augustine's arrival at Canterbury.

Our first hymn was a pilgrimage hymn, and our opening sentence was confessional: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." We confessed: "We have strayed like lost sheep." We sang the *Venite* and, after a reading from Exodus, sang the *Benedicite, omnia Opera*, an early 20th-century chant.

The church is one of four in the cure of the Rev Christopher Miles, a former engineer. The church has its own music group and I somehow found myself forking out £12 for a CD by the group — a compilation of Graham Kendrick and other modern worship songs — to raise funds for a new centre for the 15th century Addington church.

Although the service was in part a celebration of marriage, this was Lent and so Mr Miles invited us in his sermon to contemplate the meaning of suffering. "Sometimes people speak of their faith being destroyed by tragedy, by accidental death, by severe handicap," he said. "They wonder how a God of love could do that to them." This was difficult to answer. "Sometimes such a faith needs to be destroyed in order that a true faith can be established," he said. But suffering gave the church a focus for mission. "A person who can approach suffering in a positive frame of mind, knowing God can bring good out of evil, finds it character forming," he said.

Immersed in the language and architecture of the past, it was a struggle to return from the narrow, rustic lanes of Trottiscliffe to the reality of the A20 and the M26. I drove home, longing for the gentler sufferings of the Pilgrim's Way.

- *St Peter and St Paul's Church, Trottiscliffe, Kent (01732 842240).*

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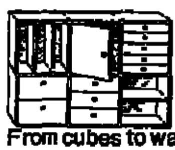

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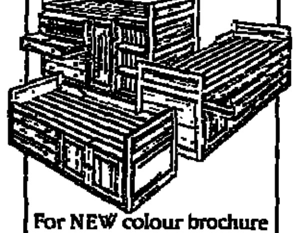

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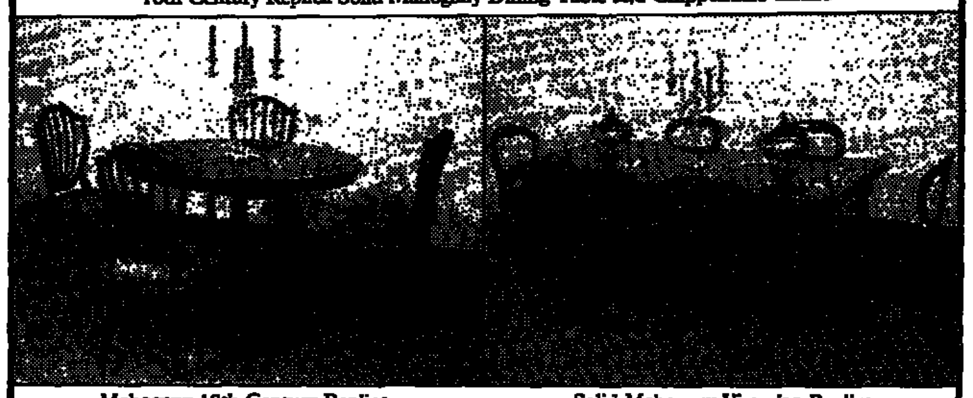

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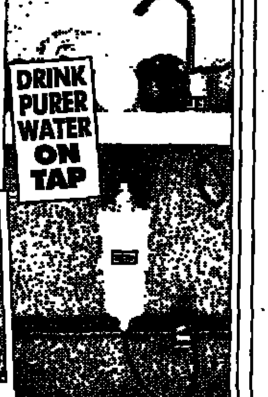

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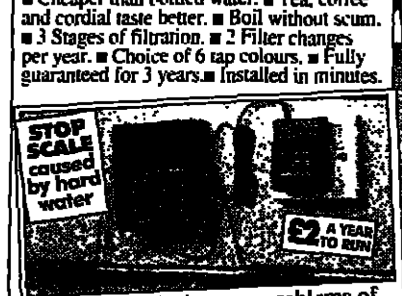

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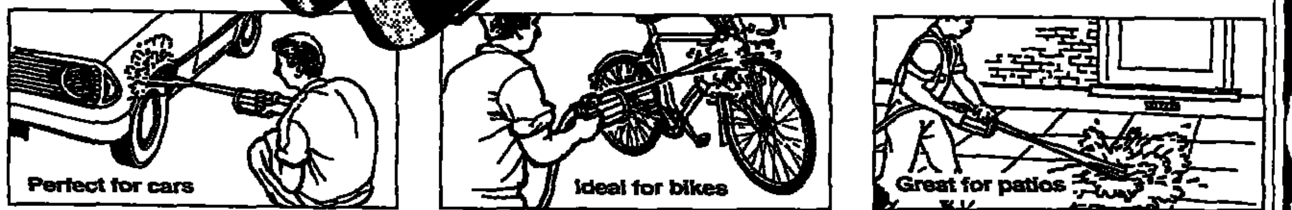

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[illegible]

Condemned as a vandal or protected? What can be done with the little gentleman in black velvet who wreaks havoc with the lawn?

Mountains out of molehills

DOWN TO **EARTH**

PAUL HEINEY

Have you ever woken up in the morning to discover swellings? Nasty outbreaks, niggling scars everywhere, irritating and big enough to burst. When it happens, is there a cure?

Not to my knowledge. Sufferers learn to live with the affliction unaided by counselling or therapy. We just cope as best we can knowing that it can strike at any moment. The mornings are the worst: we retire the night before in a content frame of mind, feeling safe, only for dawn to reveal that the malady has not gone away. True, it can go into a blissful remission, but for sure it will be back. Damn it.

Or rather, damn them. Moles! They are everywhere; not only despoiling my lawn (about which I do not care too much) but the meadows, which do matter. Grass is all that horses and livestock have to eat in the summer, and every little upheaval that a mole leaves behind is one patch of grass less to be grazed. Imagine the uproar if there were some malevolent creature which could, without warning, appear in the middle of *our* food; a pointed nose suddenly springing out of your sandwich and spoiling not only that one, but all the others for the rest of the year. Science would be all out for a remedy. But what has science given us to combat moles? Nothing at all. It has been left to folklore.

I have been offered all manner of fanciful notions, like burying wine bottles so that the note formed when the wind blows across the mouth frightens the moles away. Then how do you mow the lawn? And how can you find enough *wine bottles to plant the width of a decent* meadow and still be able to walk in a straight line? Or am I missing the point? Is it the idea that you must drink yourself into such oblivion that the sight of molehills no longer inflames you?

As the bailiffs on the site of the Newbury bypass discovered, creatures who spend most of their life below ground are notoriously difficult to deal with because you cannot possibly have the slightest idea where they are. Rabbits are easier, because their burrows are wide enough for a wriggling ferret to work its way along, or even a slender terrier. But the mole is cleverer than that *and leaves hardly an* opening to his den, just a defiant show of earth at the gate.

When you scan the *shelves for a mole* repellent, you find none. A good shop might stock 50 treatments for killing nettles, but not moles. Only something called mole-smokes, and this is where my problem begins, because pests though they are I have always thought of them as fellow creatures and if I am to do battle with them, would rather it was fair and in the open air, as with mice and rats. To smoke them to death seems a touch underhand, the more so when you read that the mole is a creature of miraculous talents. My *Encyclopaedia of Agriculture* (1908) — still my required bedtime reading — poses an interesting *question. It says of* the worm-eating mole: "Strange as it may appear, no earth is ever found in the stomach of a mole. How then, does the mole swallow worms with no earth in them?" Since that was written, biological science has cloned a sheep, but not the mole-earth-tummy conundrum. It is quite comforting to feel some fundamental truths remain entirely inexplicable. Another is where the mole gets its soil from; wherever a mole appears he throws up better soil than I have ever found in field or garden. Out of the most miserably lumpy clays he will throw forth, like lava from a volcano, a soil as fine as potting compost. What the silky little fellow has managed in moments with his little paws is more than I could achieve in a hour with a spade, fork and rake.

So *perhaps* we should all be kinder to moles. James Hogg, the famous Ettrick shepherd, put forward the largely unpopular opinion that: "The most unnatural of all persecutions that was ever *raised* in a country *is that* against the mole — that innocent and blessed little pioneer who enriches our pastures with the first top dressing, dug with great pains and labour from the fattest of the soil beneath."

Put that way, the appearance of the moley carbuncles is less depressing.

Hogg was not alone. The editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Agriculture*, writing around the same time said: "We know of a worthy old gentleman . . . who reclaimed from waste his whole paternal estate and laid it in grass fields; he maintained that the moles were his labourers, adding to the depth of soil and fertility of the sward. Husbandmen indeed have long known how to avail themselves of this part of the labours of the mole; but then they have always held it necessary to destroy the labourer." I felt rather ashamed, reading that.

In this confrontational age it is necessary to have a position on every issue, so where should we stand on the gentleman in the black velvet coat? Saint or sinner? He can be condemned for his destructive habits, or sanctified for his tilth-making talents.

I have almost talked myself round to the mole's side. You may wish to differ. I doubt I shall go as far as a mole sanctuary, but a mole farm is a possibility: newly dug soil to sell to gardeners, real moleskin trousers, digging masterclasses for eco-warriors? The possibilities are limitless.

Still alive, alive-oh – but only just

The cockle gatherers of Wales are fighting to save their precious cottage industry from modern methods

VINCE BEVORN

Cockle-picking by hand on the North Gower coast this week: the advent of dredgers would put emphasis on tinned rather than fresh cockles

It is 5am on the north Gower coast. At Penclawdd sands, grey and barely distinguishable from the sky, we wait for daybreak which signals the coming of the cockle gatherers. Some have arrived from further afield, already farming the sands.

Although an independent breed, gatherers are held captive by nature, following the ebbing tide in search of shellfish. Cockling is a way of life in this peninsula and leading the way is Selwyn's, a company fighting to preserve cottage *industry under threat.*

Selwyn's Penclawdd Seafoods is a thriving family firm going back four generations, renowned throughout South Wales *and named after* Selwyn Jones. Today his son Brian and daughter-in-law Alyson run the successful shellfish processing business *from a factory which sits on* the windswept salt marshes of the north Gower. They carry on a tradition which has evolved since their great-grandmothers and their donkeys first set foot on the sand more than a century ago.

But now dangerous clouds loom overhead.

The Dutch have taken over many of the cockle fisheries in Britain where they have introduced suction dredging, "an activity which would destroy our cockle *population*", according to Mrs Jones, who fears the effects of over-fishing. In Penclawdd the dredger companies want to operate for six months of the year, enough for the cockles to be frozen and tinned for the export market. "But our market is a fresh one. To survive, we must gather year-round." Mrs Jones says.

In 1910, 250 women collected cockles from the Burry inlet: today only 46 licences are issued to locals. Out of those, the Joneses retain seven. About a thousand people in Britain today make their living from cockles, according to the Shellfish Association of Great Britain. In 1995, 24,400 tons were gathered for sale, 80 per cent from the Wash, the Thames and the Solway Firth (mechanically dredged) and *20 per cent from the Burry* inlet (by hand). Individuals are licensed to take six hundredweight of cockles per day and patrolmen ensure quotas are not exceeded.

Brian and Alyson Jones

Gathering cockles by hand is arduous. Armed with a cram (rake) and riddle, gatherers choose a section of beach at *low tide and scrape just* beneath the sand. The cockles are scooped into the riddle, shaken so undersized ones fall through, swirled in a pool and bagged. "*It takes two to three* hours to collect our quota in the summer; longer in winter when the sand isn't as thick with cockles." Mr Jones says.

Cockles live for four to five years and spawn when a year old. Besides the Burry inlet on the western side of Carmarthen Bay, cockles are gathered *principally in the inter-tidal* flats of the Wash and Thames estuaries. They are at their best from June through to December, although they are gathered throughout the year.

Cockles from the Gower peninsula were eaten during Roman times and valued throughout the centuries. Today they can be found far away in grand London restaurants such as Bibendum (in a seafood platter) or the Hyde Park Hotel (warm with garlic, white wine and herbs). Rick Stein, the television chef, uses them at his restaurant in Padstow, Cornwall, in a shellfish marsala based on a recipe from Goa (not Gower).

Gathering cockles became *the preserve of women who* walked barefoot to Swansea market carrying loaded baskets on their heads. Women ruled the sands up until the *mid-1940s;* some were like Selwyn's mother, who provided the only income when their husbands died in the mines.

From Penclawdd to the vil*lage of Llanmorlais, a breeze* blows over the marsh as retired ponies stroll across it. Llanmorlais is where the tractors unload sacks of cockles on to a hissing conveyer belt on which they are washed. Shells are separated and the cockles fall into a double bath in which they are thoroughly *cooked and rinsed. They come* out deliciously sweet.

Fresh cockles end up in markets from Carmarthen to *Billingsgate* and the South Wales valleys. The excess is snatched up and canned by Spain and Portugal.

*The pony and cart disap*peared ten years ago, but two things remain unchanged: the shellfish are still collected by hand and cockling is banned on *Sundays. To conserve* stocks, the South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee does not allow mechanical dredging. The Sunday edict offers the cockles a day of rest.

The reorganisation of local government since April 1996 has resulted in a lack of funds for the South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee, which has policed the cockle beds and marine environment for more than 100 years. Without it, mechanical dredgers would sweep in overnight and the *effects on the cockle beds* would, according to the handpickers, be devastating. Local funding is needed by next month for the committee to *survive. The Joneses are pin*ning their hopes on possible EU funds and on their supporters rallying round.

Selwyn Jones himself died *late last year but his words* sum up the feelings on the Gower: "We have always moved with the times. Now they should help us to stay exactly as we are."

MANISHA GAMBHIR HARKINS

Traditional food at risk

MANY OF our small, traditional food sources and industries are in danger of being lost forever, threatened as they are by dredgers, alien species, the lure of cheap food and bad husbandry practices, *health scares, regulations* from Brussels, and changing tastes.

With that loss go jobs, diversity and traditional food ways. We lose a sense of place, that feeling of knowing where you *are by what you can eat. The prospect of* cheap salmon led to large-scale salmon farming off the northern shores of Scotland and this has posed serious threats to the traditional wild salmon and trout fishing grounds.

The introduction of the signal crayfish from America, a large voracious species, has all but wiped out the native population, and with it the rural idyll of catching crayfish *in chalk streams*, while European legislation put paid to the tripe dressers of northwest England.

Stilton: forced to change

Almost every postbag brings letters about this. The veal and ham pie seems to be extinct, according to a Chiswick reader who says: "I hope it won't vanish to give European and Indian snacks more room; we need it to represent English yeoman kitchen history." A reader in Derbyshire wanted to know where to get the streaky bacon "which left wonderful fat in the breakfast pan *for the mushrooms,* tomatoes, fried eggs, fried bread, instead of the awful white mess we are left with these days".

We prefer cheap bacon to good bacon *and put up with watery, tasteless, quick*-cured meat from factory-farmed pigs.

Stilton is no longer made with unpasteurised milk because of fears, in the winter of 1988-89, of listeriosis associated with soft and blue cheeses. Yet the listeriosis cases that winter were all associated with the Swiss pasteurised soft cheese, Vacherin du Mont d'Or. Among all our traditional cheesemakers of Lancashire and Cheshire, only two farms, Kirkham's in Lancashire and Appleby's in Cheshire make their cheese from unpasteuriesed milk, all the others having succumbed to pressure from their customers, the supermarkets, to pasteurise.

Cheddar, too, is, according to Randolph Hodgson of Neal's Yard "fast becoming an endangered species". Only ten farms still make Cheddar in the traditional way. As he says, it is not a *matter of retaining traditional ways for* the sake of it, but because these produce a better cheese, made slowly and *matured slowly.*

FRANCES BISSELL

Listen for the sound of a long kiss

FEATHER REPORT

PETER BROWN

Greenfinches are busy looking for des res in the garden

IT IS always a cheering sight *to see a greenfinch flying* towards one. It is such a strong, confident flyer, and its rattling twitter as it approaches sounds very self-assured. At *present, if it lands in a treetop* it may start making its loud spring call — a wheezing note, rather like a long sucking kiss. If it is nervous it will start its *pebbly twitter again, and then* it will be off with a flash of its lemon-yellow wings and its greenish-yellow rump.

However, sturdy and sure *of themselves though they* may seem, this is a dangerous time of year for greenfinches. They have been picking up the fallen seeds of fat hen, persicaria and burdock *all the* winter, but now supplies are running low, and few of the early spring flowers have yet turned to seed. There may be some surviving rosehips, and perhaps a few new dandelion *and groundsel seeds. But in* general, food is hard to find.

So, during March and April bird lovers who put out peanuts should not slacken off. *Peanuts will be extremely* welcome to greenfinches, who nowadays are as at home in gardens as they are in fields.

Most of them have paired *up by now, and one often sees* the male darting through the branches after his mate. He is also starting to sing. His song is just an extension of his *normal twitter — a full-bodied* version of it, followed by a string of more melodious notes. It might be described as a "chip chip chip" followed by a "choo choo choo".

Greenfinches do not defend large territories in the way chaffinches do. They chase other greenfinches away from a small area around the laurel bush or yew tree in which they will make their nest.

They build bulky nests of twigs and grass, lined with hairs, and like to place them in the fork of an evergreen, usually just out of reach of an inquisitive human. They will be laying their four or five eggs, which are a faint blue or green with brown blotches, at the end of April, so plant seeds will be abundant by the time the first brood hatches out.

The male feeds his mate while she is sitting, and both share in feeding the young, giving them a mixture of insects and seeds. *The podgy* green young are packed tight in the nest by the time they are ready to fly — they always look to me like a box of glacé fruits, if I climb up to look at them.

Like their close relatives, the goldfinches, they do not object to other members of their species nesting quite close by. They are sociable birds, and will often go off foraging in the summer with other greenfinches, just as they do in the winter. In this way, if one bird spots a clump of weeds with ripe seeds showering from it, the whole party can benefit.

After its first brood of young has fledged, the pair will usually have a couple more broods before summer is out, sometimes moving a long distance away each time. Well into September the trees are full of squealing young greenfinches.

For the moment, though, *the males are starting to* parade themselves round their territory with a curious butterfly-like flight, singing as they go.

In this flight they look quite different from their normal selves. They beat their wings hesitantly, then glide with all their feathers puffed up. As *they flit in this manner over* gardens and parks, frequently changing course, they are one of the most extraordinary spectacles of early spring.

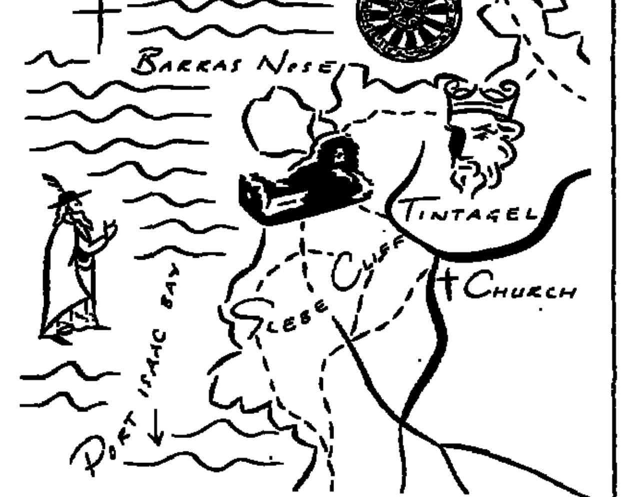
DERWENT MAY

● **What's about:** *Birders — watch out for flocks of migrating lesser-backed gulls returning to Britain to breed. Twitchers — a blue-winged teal at Little Longstone, Derbyshire; a laughing gull at Newry Docks, Co. Armagh; and a hoopoe at Abersoch, Gwynedd. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p a minute at all other times.*

SHOPAROUND ALSO APPEARS ON PAGE 14

ON THE SPOT : NORTH CORNISH COAST

Rural recommendations



The place: Descent from Glebe Cliff, Tintagel, North Cornwall.

The view: Tintagel church *and Port Isaac Bay behind*, the Island and Lower Ward of King Arthur's Castle, Merlin's Cave and Cove, Barras Nose and the King *Arthur's Castle Hotel ahead.* One of the best walks on the north Cornish coast.

The appeal: I holidayed in Tintagel every year as a boy, *beachcombed Merlin's every* morning before breakfast, and walked the cliffs every day. I brought my wife here on honeymoon.

Aficionados: *Coastal path* walkers, backpackers and tourists in season and me when it is wet.

Historical interest: *Abounds, though it is partly* mythical. King Arthur's Castle, a romantic and vestigial ruin, is really 13th century, and was built in the time of Earl Richard of Cornwall, Henry III's younger brother, who became King of the Romans. But Geoffrey of Monmouth could not have picked a better spot for King Uther Pendragon's night of passion with Igraine, wife of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, *the tryst arranged by Merlin* which resulted in Arthur's birth. Sadly when they filmed *The Knights of the Round Table* with Robert Taylor, Tintagel could only be featured as a Scottish castle laid ruin by Lancelot.

Time of day/time of year to visit: Our honeymoon was March, holidays were June and September. All lovely. Morning has the best light, but sunsets from Glebe Cliff can be spectacular.

OS Reference: 050889 (on Landranger 200)

How to Get There: From Tintagel Church walk toward the sea and bear right toward King Arthur's Castle and Merlin's.

Also nearby: Tintagel village is not wonderful but The Old Post Office, a 14th-century house owned by the National Trust, is a must as is King Arthur's Great Hall of Chivalry, creation of a custard magnate whose Order of the Round Table had a membership of 16,000.

ROBIN YOUNG

● *Illustration: Jane Spencer*

هكذا من الأصل

PETER FRYER

Ray Leonard surveys a polluted beach at Blackhall

Sea change for the black coast

After decades of use as a tip for pit waste, the shores of County Durham are being returned to nature. **Clare Stewart** reports

While the attractions of County Durham's short coastline — its remarkable butterflies, flowers and cliffs — often set the pulses racing, the blackened and heavily polluted beaches can also make the heart sink. But not, perhaps, for much longer.

Head east from Durham towards the North Sea and you come across signposts to collieries. You will not find any, though. Outside the port of Seaham and along the coast road to Peterlee and Hartlepool there are areas of bleak wasteland and new development sites. These, on the surface at least, are all that remain of six collieries that once dominated the coast, providing 11,000 jobs. The last pit, Easington, closed four years ago. Left behind are unemployment and an environmental challenge.

For more than a century parts of the coast were used as the cheapest and most convenient rubbish tip for mine waste, with as much as 2.5 million tonnes of spoil being dumped in peak years. Overhead conveyors carried the waste from the pits and over the clifftops to be flung into the sea just off the foreshore, while convoys of lorries dumped large amounts of slurry from the coal washeries.

The beaches known for golden sands and seaside outings in the early 1900s have long since disappeared under 12ft-15ft of spoil in places, and the shoreline has been pushed further out to sea. The result is barren areas which proved more suitable for one of the *Alien* films than for building sandcastles. So, not surprisingly, the Durham coast does not get glowing write-ups in books on beautiful Britain, and many guides ignore the coast between Hartlepool and Sunderland, despite it being Britain's only stretch of magnesium limestone cliffs.

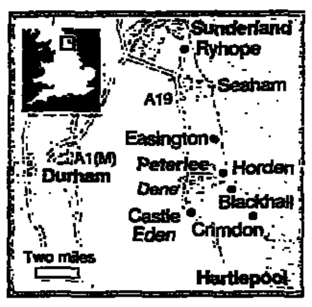
This limestone supports flower-rich grasslands of botanical interest and much of the coast is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are also a number of denes, dramatic steep-sided valleys of ancient and unspoilt woodland that run inland from the coast. The largest, Castle Eden Dene, is a nature reserve managed by English Nature.

The demise of the coal industry dealt a heavy blow to the region, but has also opened the way to environmental change after more than 40 years of battling to stop the damaging effects of tipping. In 1984, a Royal Commission trumpeted that the beaches were a national disgrace, while local pressure groups kept up a dogged campaign for change, prompting headlines about the "sands of grime" and the "Costa del Soiled".

Now, however, a £10 million project called Turning the Tide has started. This will tackle environmental improvement along a 13-mile stretch of coast from Ryhope south to Crimdon. It will also link a number of conservation schemes already under way. The project is part of the East Durham Task Force, a regeneration initiative, and the participants include Durham County Council, Easington District Council, the Countryside Commission, English Nature and the National Trust, which owns nearly five miles of the coastline.

BEAMISH MUSEUM

In the 1890s, before pollution left its mark, the golden sands of County Durham were a favourite destination for daytrippers



In January, Turning the Tide was awarded £4.5 million by the Millennium Commission, which has given the project the financial spur and momentum to ensure that a large part of it will be completed by the year 2000.

Despite the pollution, the mines provided some benefits to the coast. The unsightliness of the pits meant that other forms of seaside development, such as caravan parks, were kept at bay, and the higher beach levels from the dumping of spoil provided some protection for the cliffs from sea erosion.

This summer work begins on the monumental task of removing two shoreline spoil heaps of about 1.5 million tonnes at Easington and Horden. Unless removed, these heaps will continue to pollute the beaches and over time become unstable. Some of this spoil is going back to the Easington colliery site, which is to be landscaped, and where there are plans for a visitors' centre. At Horden, the spoil will return to the clifftop where, with a limestone capping, it will be resown as grassland.

Removing all the spoil from the coastline would be costly and environmentally difficult. But there is one natural answer. "The sea can reduce the spoil by about a foot a year," says Ray Leonard, the project manager who is based with Durham County Council.

Cleaner seawater also helps, and investment by Northumbrian Water in better sewage treatment works is tackling the problem of beach outfall. Longer term, there remains the impact of mine waste on the seabed, where the effect on marine life is being studied.

Turning the Tide is not just concerned with the impact of coal mining on the seashore and marine environment. Much of the coastal strip is intensively farmed arable land, where the use of fertilisers has damaged the natural flora and fauna of the limestone grasslands along the clifftops. Farming has also contributed to cliff erosion, with land drains and run-off from the fields washing away soil.

The project aims to acquire as much of the coastal strip as possible and return it to accessible natural grassland, and to prevent SSSI areas being squeezed between natural cliff-face erosion and arable cultivation.

This reinstated grassland, says Mike Lowe, the countryside officer for Durham County Council, "will be one of the biggest habitat recreation schemes in the country".

Biodiversity is the guiding principle here, and the flower and grass-seed being used has been harvested from the small surviving areas of unspoiled grassland, rather than using imported seeds.

Bloody cranesville (*Geranium sanguineum*) is a feature of the limestone grasslands along with the rockrose, the main food supply for the Durham Argus, a species of butterfly unique to the county.

Several varieties of orchid, including the common spotted and fragrant orchid, can be found, and the reintroduction of the rare green-winged orchid, driven out by farming, is being considered.

Golden sands and wild orchids are not the sole criteria for success, however. Rekindling local pride is important, as is opening up the coast for wider enjoyment. Better paths and access routes are planned to allow exploration of the clifftops and beaches, along with improved public information about the denes and other natural features. A cycle route through the area is planned which will link into the national Sustrans cycle network.

"Turning the Tide is not about 'Blackpool and deckchairs'," Mr Leonard says. It is about rediscovering the natural attraction of the coastline. A vast influx of visitors in cars is neither wanted nor will it be provided for, he adds.

As the area copes with the economic and social problems after the closure of the mines, the project is "about change and this community," Mr Leonard says. "It shows what can happen if people invest in this area."

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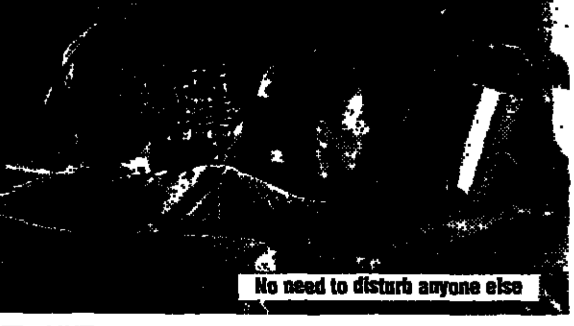
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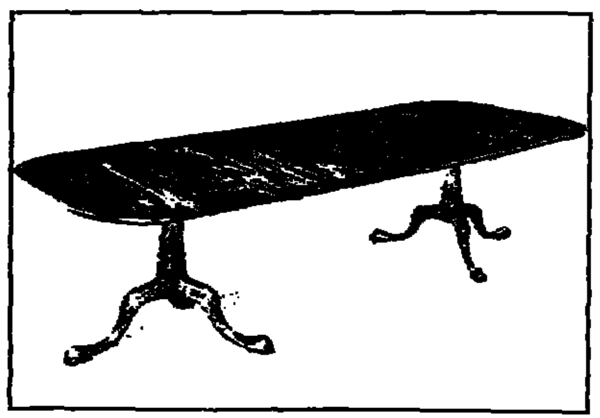

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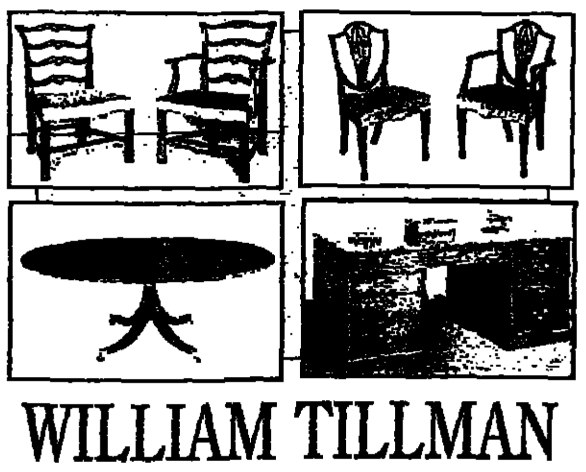

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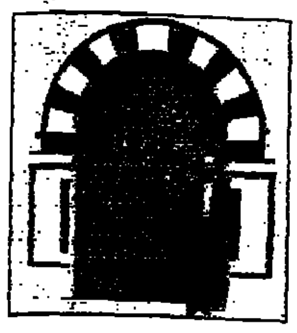

Old sights for the new beach invaders

Tunisia - 18

THE TIMES travel

Enthusiasts guide to a stylish pub crawl

England - 20

If it's good enough for Diana...

Finding a safe holiday destination free from the prying eyes of the paparazzi is no easy task for the world's most photographed woman, but she has found it in the Caribbean islands, says **Anthony Holden**

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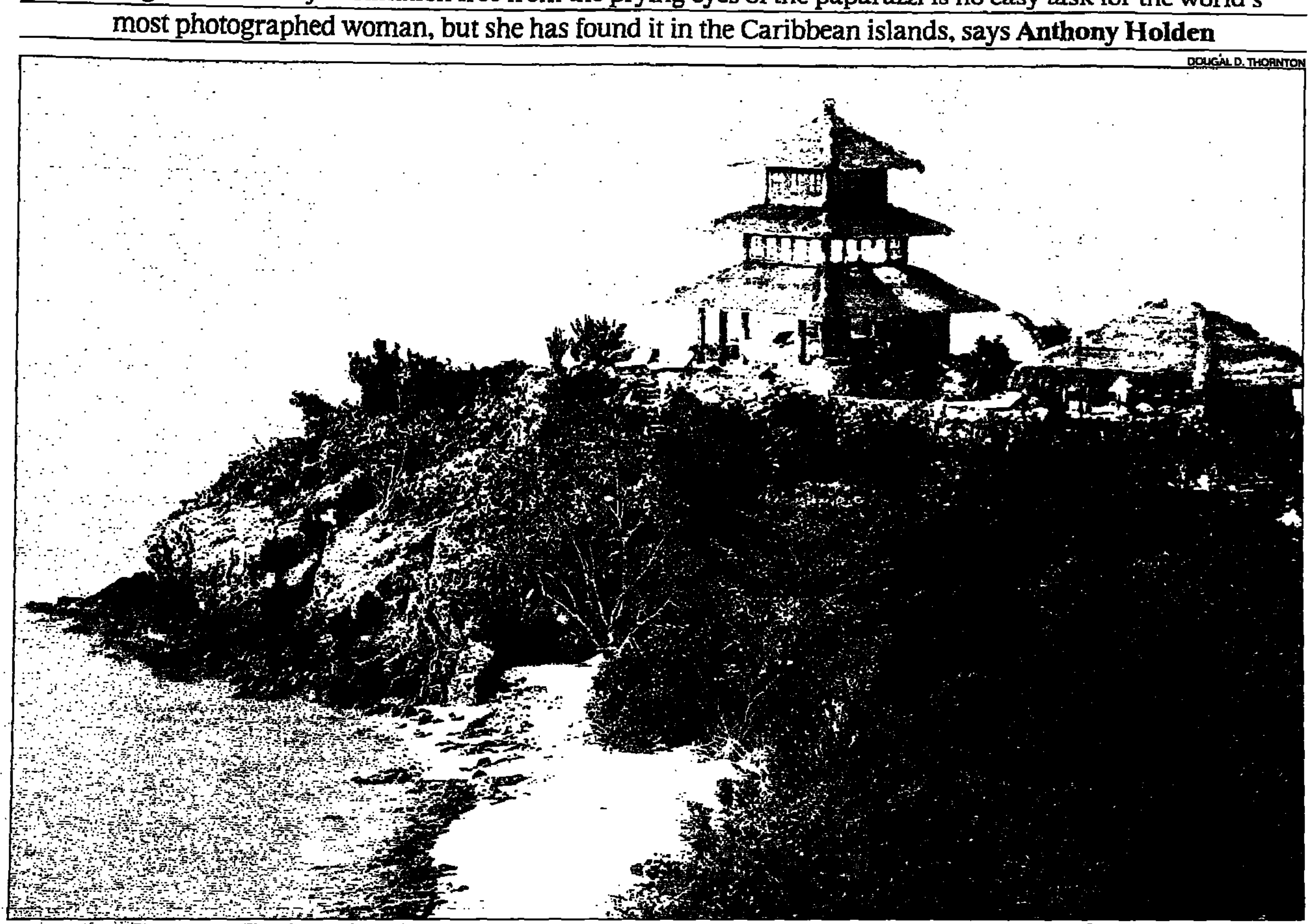

Romantic hideaway: one of the Balinese-style villas on Necker, in the British Virgin Islands, owned by Richard Branson. A staff of 22 is included in the price, from £6,700 a day

On the important subject of escaping the British winter, Diana, Princess of Wales has rather different criteria from the rest of us mere mortals. Apart from sun, sea and sand, and five-star luxury, the time-off priorities of the world's most famous woman are — unsurprisingly — privacy and security.

Since an unhappy experience in the Indian Ocean in 1993, when a break with two girlfriends on the island of Moyo was cut short by the nocturnal invasions of a wild pig, Diana has opted exclusively for the West Indies. She learnt to love the Caribbean in the late 1980s at the height of her marital problems, when she holidayed without her husband on the tiny island of Necker, Richard Branson's private fiefdom in the British Virgin Islands.

Fleet Street's royal "ratpack" twice checked into the jaunty nearby resort of Bitter End, on Virgin Gorda, as Diana and her sons enjoyed island house parties hosted by her mother, Frances Shand-Kydd, for all three of her daughters and their children. In those days, when Diana was still HRH, members of the royal protection squad also got to enjoy the expensive delights of Necker.

Since her separation from the Prince of Wales in 1992, Diana has felt freer to roam the idyllic chain of Caribbean islands — many of which remain her former mother-in-law's dominions — in search of her ideal destination. In all, she has taken eight West Indian holidays with or without her sons, depending on school terms.

A series of protocol hiccups in 1993 highlighted the problems attending any holiday the Princess takes anywhere, before or since her divorce last year. Following a last-minute decision to take her sons on an end-of-year sunshine break, after they had spent Christmas without her at Sandringham, she faced a choice between three venues favoured by the Caribbean jet set.

The front-runner was Jamaica's top resort, Round Hill, and specifically Room 26 — the most alluring hotel suite in the West Indies, with its own chef and maid, four double-bedrooms, and a private swimming pool in the open-air sitting room.

This is where Paul McCartney takes his family for Christmas, but the Jamaican authorities could not countenance a visit from the Princess and the future King William without mounting an honour guard at the airport to bid them welcome. These days she goes on holiday precisely to get away from such formalities, so an advance party of Special Branch officers changed direction to check out Jumby Bay, the super-exclusive island resort just off Antigua.

They soon agreed with the management that the festive season — the busiest time of the Caribbean year, when the place is packed to overflowing — would not be ideal timing for a royal visit, so instead she went to Nevis. Private villas clearly make sense for Diana if privacy can be guaranteed.

The near-impossibility of this was demonstrated last summer when photographers invaded the grounds of the French villa she shared for a week with her fellow royal divorcée the Duchess of York. Princess Margaret, Diana's next-door neighbour in Kensington Palace, also loves the West Indies, spending several weeks a year at her private villa on the Windward island of Mustique. Reluctant to capitalise on her royal relations, Diana opted instead for a week at the luxury villa of a friend, the photographer Patrick Demarchelier, on the select but pricey Leeward island of St Barthelemy — known to its habitués as St Barth's and to others as Manhattan-sur-mer.

But fame trapped her in Demarchelier's mountain retreat, with tantalising, long-distance views of dreamy beaches impossible for her to visit. Not until the end of 1995 did Diana finally find the super-resort of her dreams, which answered all her needs: the small but ultra-chic K Club on the tiny Antilles island of Barbuda, where the few other guests are almost as famous as herself.

After a winter break there with her girl Friday, Victoria Mendham, Diana returned to the K Club with her sons for Easter 1996, and then again with Mendham for last Christmas and new year. The previous week I had been there myself at the end of a long trail checking out Diana's Caribbean choices for *Times* readers.

REX FEATURES

The Princess on the Leeward island of St Barthelemey

BARBUDA

IT IS NOT hard to see why the K Club, on the otherwise empty island of Barbuda, has become Diana's favourite Caribbean hideaway. As part of the service, free of charge, they mobilise the Antiguan army to seal off both ends of the private 1.5-mile beach for her, and a coastguard vessel to keep the paparazzi at bay. Amid celebrity guests too super-cool to stare, Diana can enjoy her morning run along the water's edge, followed by a strenuous exercise session, in as much privacy as she can find anywhere in the world.

The K Club, 40 beachfront villas set in a 230-acre private estate, is as near to Caribbean perfection as it gets, living up to its boast to treat every guest as "the most pampered Robinson Crusoe in the world". Even its private plane, which picks you up in Antigua for the 20-minute hop to Barbuda, is liveried in the distinctive turquoise-and-white decor chosen to mirror the sea and sand by Krizia, the Italian fashion designer who opened the resort in 1989.

The K Club's away-from-it-all policy rises above newspapers or television but its spacious and airy Club House has a games room and library with bestsellers in four languages, and a well stocked bar beside the sea water pool and Jacuzzi. Its array of blue-and-white sofas double as a "conversation area" — if the celebrity guests unbend enough to speak to each other. "The Princess and her sons can sit right here without anyone bothering them," Michael Neutelings, the Dutch manager, told me over a banana daiquiri.

Like any resident film star, they can also eat unmolested in the club's elegant beachfront restaurant, serving superb haute cuisine "based on Mediterranean traditions", or in the privacy of their two-bedroom villa. But they cannot send postcards home: the K Club is far too refined to offer such kitsch tourist fare.

The K Club's spacious villas, cooled by trade winds as much as air-conditioning, were designed by the Italian architect Gianni Gamondi, a friend of Krizia who is responsible for many resort hotels on Sardinia's Costa Smeralda.

The club also has a nine-hole golf course, two floodlit tennis courts and all the water sports but, in the unlikely event that guests want to go out looking for action, there are pheasants, deer, wild boar, even buffaloes to hunt in the island's 70 square mile swampy interior. The club lays on excursions to the Grand Lagoon, a wildlife sanctuary boasting the extremely rare frigate bird. Diana, who may take her sons back to the K Club this Easter, after they have been on an African safari with their father, is unlikely to find a safer haven.

ANTIGUA

JUMBY BAY Island is the offshore Antiguan resort so exclusive that it turned Diana away because of all the helicopters, photographers and other riff-raff she would inevitably trail in her wake. Or so the story goes.

In fact, as explained above, the timing was not right for a visit which William Anderson, the resort's American manager, naturally says he would welcome. In 1993, however, the opportunity for some publicity was seized by a minority of the mega-rich owners of private villas on the island, as they embarked on a long-running legal dispute with its owners.

Apart from Lord Sainsbury, the novelist Ken Follett and the reclusive British businessmen Roland Franklin and Peter Swann, Jumby Bay residents include the British-born American television star Robin Leach, host of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. He said: "We voted no to Princess Di and decided we didn't want the helicopters and the paparazzi."

The 300-acre island off the northeast coast of Antigua, accessible only by its own private ferry, is so secure that its rooms have no keys, only a safe in which to lock away all the cash you will not be needing during your stay. Prices, though steep, are all-inclusive, covering most facilities (tennis, water sports), drinks and meals, including the very acceptable house wines from the New York winery of John and Harry Mariani, the island's owners.

The Mariani brothers bought what was then Long Island in 1986, renamed it Jumby Bay (in Antiguan folklore, a *jumbie* is a friendly native spirit) and set out to turn it into one of the most exclusive clubs on earth. The villas are dotted all over the island. Bicycles are provided free and golf buggies are available for hire, but visitors have to negotiate the flocks of wild sheep.

Aeroplanes taking off from nearby Antigua airport are the only noisy clouds on the perfect holiday horizon. The rooms have ceiling fans, bars and private patios — but no keys, telephones, televisions, radios or clocks.

NEVIS

SITUATED on the island of Nevis, Montpelier sits 800 feet up the side of a volcano. The historic sugar plantation house, where Horatio Nelson married Frances Nisbet in 1787, is far too English to boast about its unexpected visit from Diana and her sons, plus a dozen security and other staff, who cheerfully bounced down to the beach every day in the back of the hotel's flatbed truck.

Picture a British country house weekend party in the West Indian sun and you get a flavour of the lifestyle hosted by Montpelier's eccentric English owner, James Milnes Gaskell, and his wife Celia. After peaceful days, when most guests forsake the pool for picnic lunches half an hour away at a private three-acre stretch of Pinney's Beach, the evenings begin with a cocktail party at 7.45pm, followed by dinners at which guests are encouraged to mingle.

Mr Milnes Gaskell was educated at Eton and Cambridge and bought this 370-acre plot in 1963 as a virtual ruin. Four years later, in June 1967, he had just finished building his hotel when the government put him in jail for siding with the Opposition over independence from Britain. After 42 days in St Kitts prison ("not too bad, actually"), he was deported. For 13 years he hired locals to run the hotel before he was allowed to return after a change of government in 1980.

Most guests enjoy squeezing the rest of his colourful life story out of their host during their stay. If you enjoy the company of strangers and don't long to be right on the beach, Montpelier will make a welcome change from all those American-style resort hotels — exemplified by the huge Four Seasons nearby

NECKER

THIS private 75-acre paradise in the British Virgins, owned by Richard Branson, sends its speedboat to collect guests from the nearby airport at Beef Island, Tortola. There is accommodation for groups of

Continued on page 17

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Continued from page 15

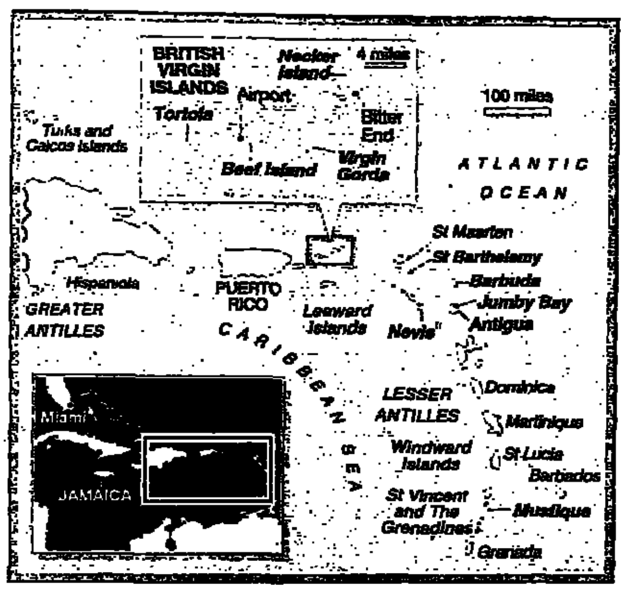
20-24 between the ten bedrooms in the main house and two separate, Balinese-style villas, Bali Hi and Bali Lo, with free run of their own private island for as long as they can afford it — which may not be very long. Necker costs £10,000 a day — divisible among as many guests as can get on with each other for a week or more. A New York broker recently took the place for ten days for £100,000 — just for himself, his wife and their baby. Larger groups are the norm.

Necker is run for Branson by Mark and Joanne Netherwood, a genial young Australian husband-and-wife team, and would be the ideal place to take all your friends if you won the lottery.

Beside the sleekly furnished main house, which has a full-size snooker table and state-of-the-art hi-fi system, lies a sizeable pool commanding stunning views across the sea to neighbouring islands. There are breakfast areas, sunset seats, a gym, island walks and endless nooks and crannies, as well as three different beaches, one with tennis courts and barbecue area. But meals — included in the price with as much as you can drink — are strictly communal.

Those who share Branson's taste for madcap adventure can parasail behind a speedboat or water-ski behind a helicopter. There are even plans for a "monkey run" so visitors can abseil from house to beach. Branson's own spacious master bedroom, with its private rooftop terrace, should suit the group leader as well as it did Diana, for whom the island proved the perfect escape from prying lenses. Necker is the ultimate bolt-hole for those with money to burn.

● *The author was a guest of Caribbean Connection.*



CARIBBEAN FACT FILE

■ British Airways (0345 222111) flies to Antigua from £771; as does BWIA (0181-577 1100) from £752.

■ Necker Island can only be booked direct, as below. Package deals at all the others, including return flights from the UK, are available from Caribbean Connection (01244 341131) and Elegant Resorts (01244 897999). Prices vary according to season. K Club: from £3,206 to £4,449 *per person, seven nights full-board* in cottage room. Jumby Bay: £2,358 to £4,448 per person, seven nights full board in a deluxe junior suite. Montpelier: £1,058 to £1,960 per person, seven nights *bed and breakfast only in a* premier room.

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Twelve-minute, seven-mile transfer by courtesy bus from Barbuda's Codrington airstrip (20-minute flight from Antigua £113 each way by hotel's private jet or £17 each way by scheduled LIAT flight); 28 spacious, air-conditioned cottage rooms with large shower/bathroom, seafront terrace with bar, patio dining area and private beach frontage; 12 garden villas and luxury suites also available at higher prices.
Daily rates for room in single or double cottage, based on two people sharing: £1,100 (December 16-April 14); £600 (April 15-May 31); £500 (June 1-August 31). Closed September 1-November 14. Reopens (November 15-December 15.) Prices do not include government tax of 8.5 per cent, and 10 per cent service charge. Antigua departure tax is £8 per person. Prices include: all meals (but not drinks), room service, picnic service, tennis (floodlit), snorkelling, windsurfing, sailing boats, TV and video room, K Club assistance at Antigua airport.
Available at extra cost: deep-sea *fishing, reef and bone fishing,* water-skiing, bird watching, golf, massage, hairdresser.
All major credit cards accepted.
Dress code: "Elegantly casual" (jackets and ties not required).
Children under 12 not accepted.

ANTIGUA

Address: Jumby Bay Island, PO Box 243, St John's, Antigua (001 268 462 6000). Three miles (20 minutes by courtesy bus and ferry) from V.C. Bird airport, Antigua, a nine-hour BA direct flight from London. All-inclusive daily rates: Luxury villa (two-three bedroom, price per room for two guests) £1,100 (December 20-January 3); £1,050 (January 4-*February 1); £1,100 (February 2-28);* £880 (April 6-May 24 and November 2-December 18), £800 (May 25-November 1). Deluxe junior suite: £800 (20 Dec-3 Jan, 2-28 Feb), £700 (4 Jan-1 Feb), £566 (6 April-24 May, 2 Nov-18 Dec), £440 (25 May-1 Nov).
Prices do not include government tax of 8.5 per cent and service charge of 10 per cent.
Departure tax: £8 per person.
Prices include: accommodation, all meals including unlimited house wine, cocktails, launch and airport taxi, postage, American newspapers, use of tennis courts, snorkelling gear, sailing boats, sailboards, fitness centre, bicycle and croquet.
Available at extra cost: chartered sailing, deep-sea fishing, golf, resident tennis pro, scuba diving and instruction, water-skiing, massage, laundry, sightseeing/shopping excursions to Antigua (including the casino).
All major credit cards accepted.
Dress code "elegantly casual" (long trousers and shirts with collars for men in the evenings).
October-May: no children under eight.

NEVIS

Address: Montpelier Plantation, PO Box 474, Nevis, Windward Islands (001 869 469 3462).
Twelve miles (30 minutes by taxi costing £13) from Nevis airport, *accessible by 30-minute LIAT flight from Antigua* for £35 each way. Sixteen rooms, (nine with king-size bed, eight with two doubles, one family suite. Daily rates for double room, bed & breakfast only: *£187 (December 15-April 15), £120* (April 16-December 14). Lunch, dinner and drinks extra.
Prices do not include government tax of 7 per cent and service charge of 10 per cent.
Nevis departure *tax: £7 per person.*
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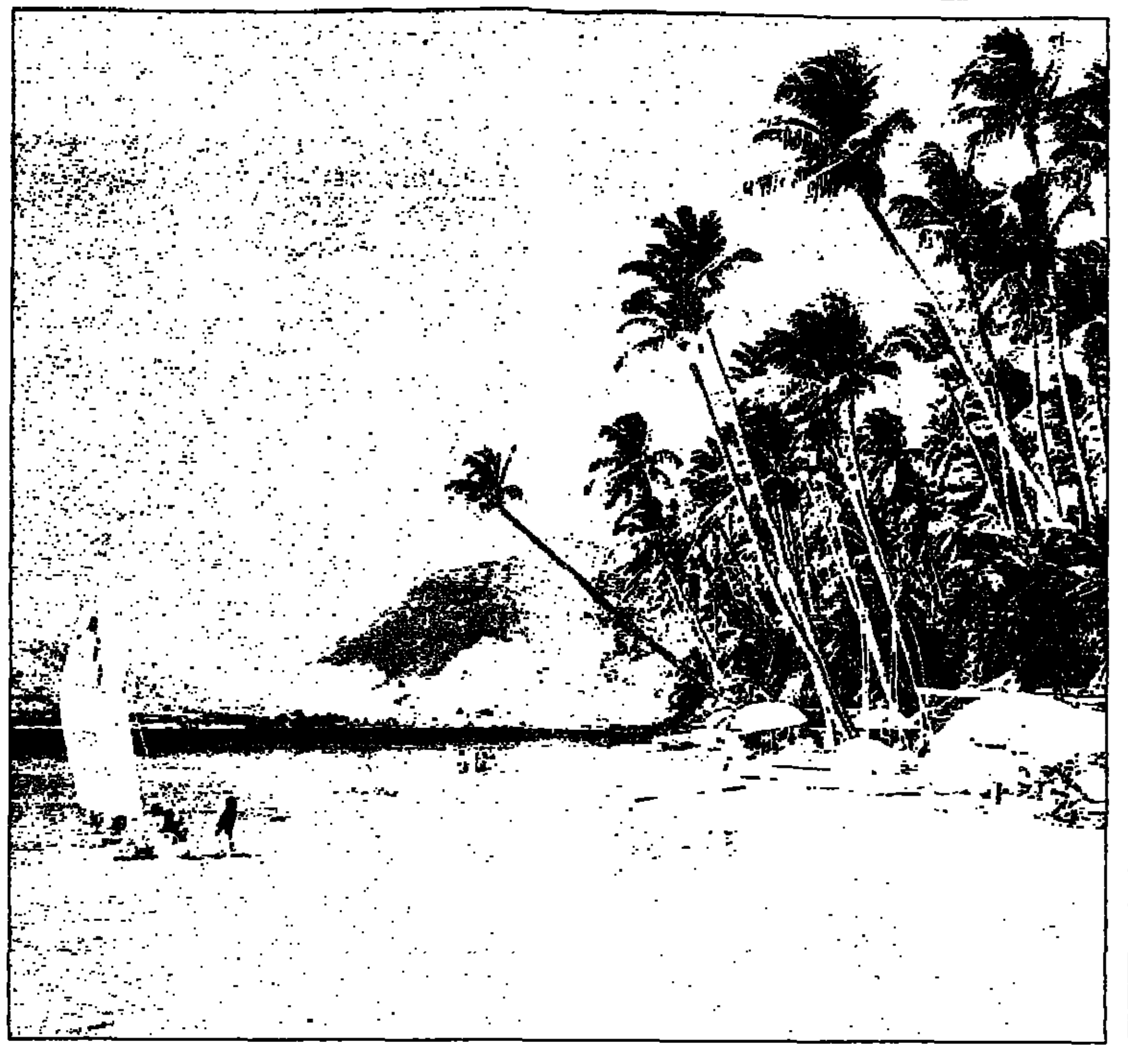
Dress code "casual chic to informal" (long trousers and shirts with collars for men in the evenings). Children over eight welcome.

NECKER

Address: PO Box 1091, The Valley, Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands (809 494 2757).
UK bookings via Virgin Ultimate, *120 Campden Hill Road,* London W8 7AR (0171-727-8000).
Half-hour transfer by private launch from Tortola airport, accessible by 90-minute flight from Antigua cost £108 return.
Helicopter transfer from St Thomas (US Virgin Islands) available at extra charge.
Ten double rooms in main house, plus two in separate villas.
Daily rates for entire island, *including transfer and all rooms,* all meals and drinks, staff of 22, use of pool, tennis courts and gym, Sunfish and sailing dinghies, water-skiing and snorkel equipment, for 20-24 guests, *$16,000 per day; for 15-19 guests,* $15,000 per day; for eight to 14 guests, $13,000; for one to seven guests, $11,000.
Price includes a boat to visit other islands, laundry and business facilities, seven per cent local tax. Available at extra cost: travel arrangements to and from UK, scuba diving and instruction, deep-sea fishing, yacht charter, secretarial assistance. A 2.5 *per cent service charge is* payable on departure.
Supplement charged during Christmas and Easter. No dress code. Children welcome.

■ *Reading: The Travel* Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *The Traveller's Tree*, by Patrick Leigh Fermor (Penguin, £7.99). *Diving Guide to the Eastern Caribbean*, by Martha Watkins Gilkes (Macmillan, £10.95). *Cruising Around the Caribbean* (Thomas Cook, £15.99). *The Northeastern Caribbean*, by James Henderson (Cadogan, £9.99).



Pinney's Beach on Nevis, where Diana, Princess of Wales arrived unexpectedly to spend a holiday

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Happy as a sandboy

The island of Aruba is one of the best-kept secrets in the Caribbean

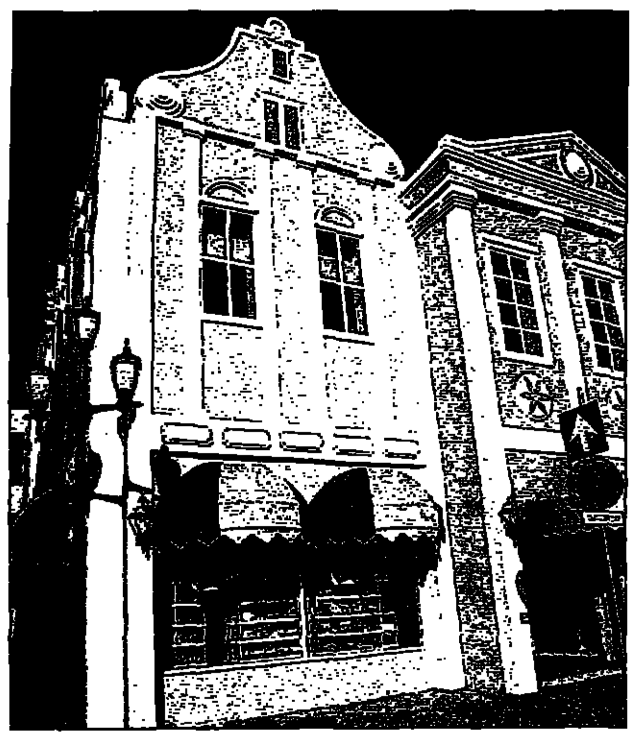
The car number plates are a cheerful red and carry the slogan *Aruba: One Happy Island*. It's naff, but remarkably close to being true. This was once a deserted patch of rock rising from the Caribbean 15 miles off the coast of Venezuela, covered in cacti and visited only by the occasional pirate. Now it has miles of palm-fringed beaches, breakers and white sand, dream hotels and restaurants.

The climate is warm, about 82 degrees all year round, with cooling trade winds, and it lies outside the hurricane belt. The perfect spot for a romantic interlude in the West Indies — so why have we never heard of Aruba?

Mostly because it is a former Dutch colony, not a British one. Holland seized Aruba in 1636 and, apart from a brief occupation in the Napoleonic Wars, it has been Dutch ever since. It has become one of the most attractive islands in the Caribbean, but its visitors are from the United States, Latin America and the Netherlands. Almost no one goes there from Britain and we are definitely missing out.

The island is small, 19 miles by six. Apart from the beaches and the climate, its magic lies in its people. They are descended from the Arawak Indians, Dutch or Spanish settlers and negroes from other islands (there was no slavery on Aruba), and are warmly welcoming. Apart from one oil refinery, Aruba lives by tourism, but there is more to it than that; as Arubans smile in the sunlight, they seem genuinely eager to share their good fortune.

What they have to share is a tropical paradise and a legacy of Dutch rule that has left them a standard of living not far behind Western Europe. There is no ex-colonial resentment; over steins of Heineken. Holland is spoken of with misty-eyed affection.



Dutch-style buildings in Oranjestad, the main town

The Dutch have bequeathed good schools, an excellent health service, modern roads and an island of manicured neatness straight out of the polders. Everyone speaks English, as well as Dutch, Spanish and the local Papiamento. There may be only 81,000 Arubans, but they constitute an autonomous province within the Netherlands — amazed and amused that they have been given their own parliament, flag and national anthem. The government sends its young people to university in America or Holland, the economy is buoyant, with no shanty towns and minimal crime.

International hotels are concentrated along the north-west coast, a luxurious new 400 room Mariott, Holiday Inn, Hyatt and so on. Smaller locally-owned hotels are of equally high standard and perhaps more friendly. A good example is the Bucati Beach, owned and managed by Ewald Biemans and his wife Susan, right on the shore with 63 well-appointed rooms, all with an ocean view. There are also guest houses, villas and apartments.

Eating out is varied and good value. At Brisas del Mar, Lucia Rasmijn offers lobster, baby shark and a kaleidoscope of other seafood in a waterside fishing shed; the Ellis family's Papiamento restaurant has an international menu, with tables around the swimming pool in the garden of a colonial mansion that is also their home. Snack meals are inexpensive, dinner under the stars in an idyllic setting — of which there are many — from £20 a head.

You can hire the gear for scuba diving, windsurfing and most other watersports; water-skiing is available and a submarine called Atlantis runs underwater tours. Apart from renting a jeep or mountain bike to explore the island, there is riding and golf. As well as numerous bars and nightclubs, Aruba has 11 casinos with roulette, blackjack and rows of one-armed bandits, pulled for hours by gum-chewing Mid-Westerners with glazed eyes.

But there is no point going unless you are looking for total hedonism in a place that *pretends, quite successfully,* that all the problems in the world have evaporated. "Ours is a happy paper," said the editor of *Aruba Today*. "We don't print any bad news." Live like an Aruban — relax in the sun, eat and drink well, make love within sound of Caribbean breakers. Forget sightseeing.

Despite 300 years of Dutch occupation, there is little sign of the past: some delicate wood-carving in the Church of St Anna, one windmill and a few Amsterdam-style gabled houses in the main town, Oranjestad. The rusty masts of the single German freighter sunk in the Second World War have become a major attraction for boat trips.

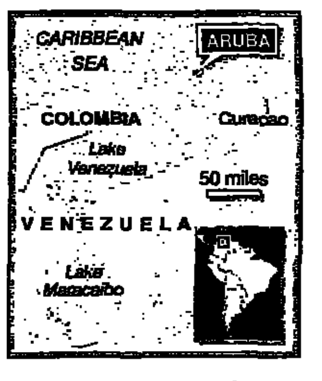
So few British visitors go, that you cannot fly direct. But there are regular KLM flights from Amsterdam, with connections from Heathrow and 13 other UK airports, including Bristol, Edinburgh and Manchester.

The best starting point for information is the Aruba Tourism Authority. The nearest office is in The Hague (but the staff speak English).

MICHAEL HARTLAND

● *The author was a guest of KLM and Journey Latin America.*

ARUBA FACT FILE



■ KLM flies from Heathrow and 13 regional airports via Amsterdam. Return flights, from £439, and accommodation can be booked through Journey Latin America, 14-16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD (0181-747 3108).

■ Other companies include: North American Travel, 241 Kensington High Street, London W8 6SA (0171-938 3737). The Travel Design Company, 51 High Street, Reigate RH2 9RT (01737 222250).

■ Reservations for the Aruba Marriott Resort can be made through Marriott worldwide (0800 221222): rooms from £130 a day. Rooms at the Bucuti Beach Resort (00 29 7831100) cost from £93 a day.

■ Details of guest houses and apartments from the Aruba Tourism Authority in The Hague (00 3170 356 6220).

■ Reading: *A Short History of the West Indies* by J.H.Parry. *(Macmillan, £7.95) Travels with My Trombone* by Henry Shukman (Flamingo, £6.99). *Caribbean Fielding Guide* (£13.95).

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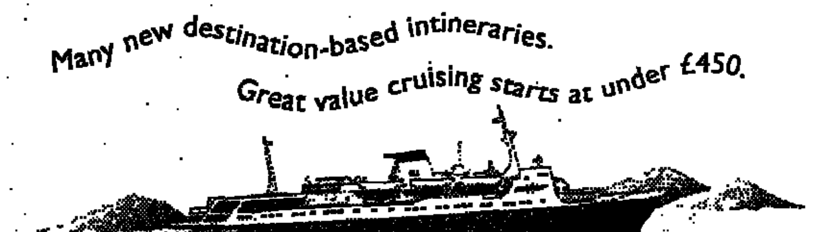

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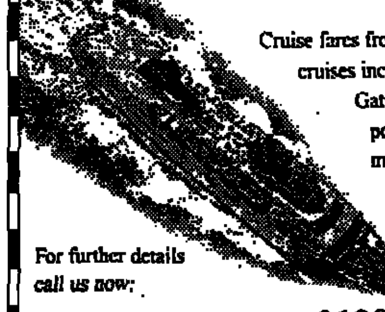

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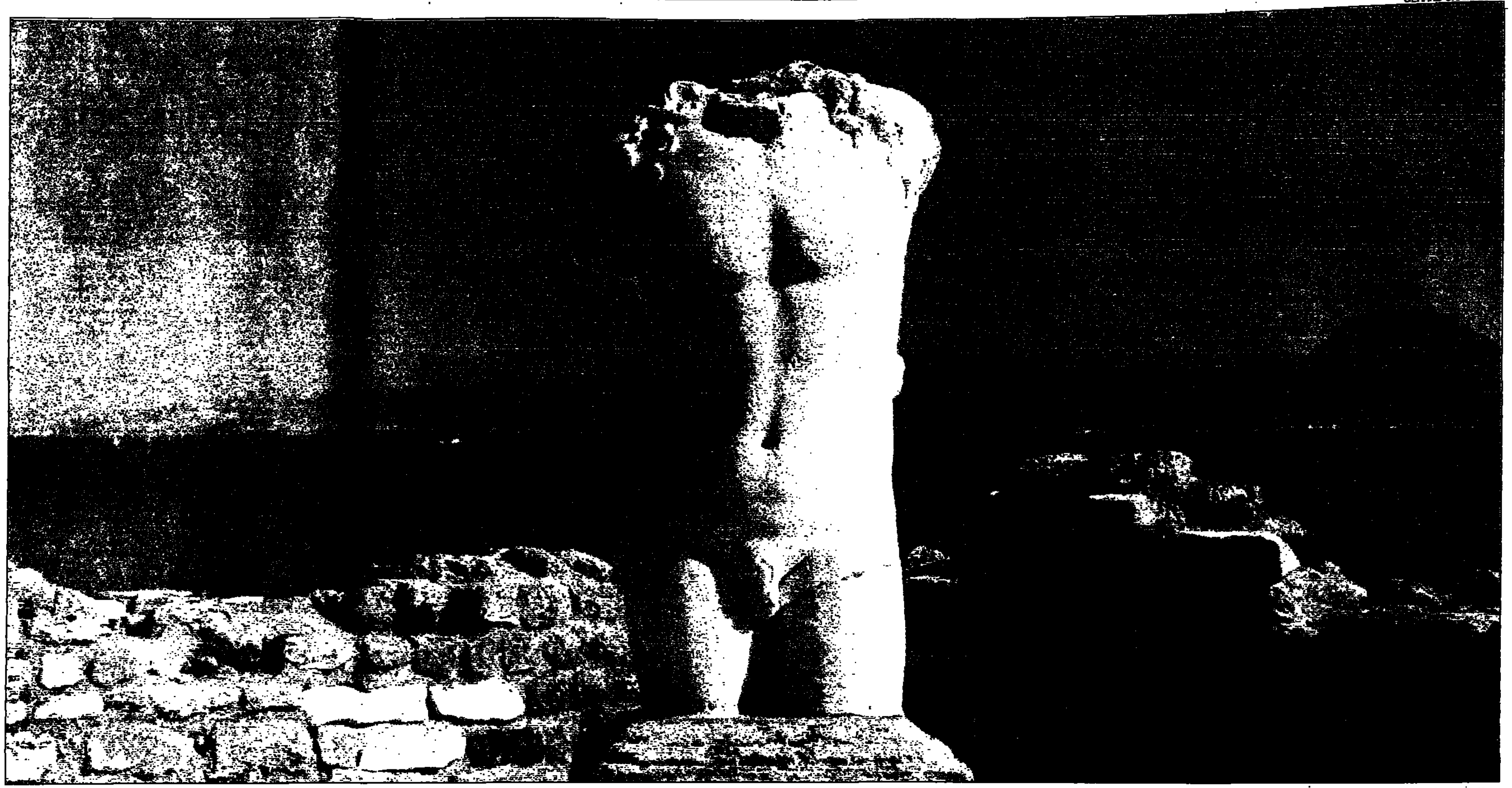
Tunisia: The views, mosques and forts of past invaders are extravagant – but you can get a good meal for £2

GERARD CHAMPLONG



The ruins of Carthage beside the Mediterranean are a popular stop on the main tourist trail in Tunisia, complementing the Roman amphitheatre at El Jem, the Great Mosque at Kairouan and the once formidable fortress of Mahdia

From the Vandals to tourists

With its reliable sunshine, white sandy beaches, and bargain-basement prices, Tunisia is one of the most promising holiday spots in the Mediterranean, combining a touch of North African exotic with French sophistication.

Although most of the tourist hotels are at Monastir, or along the beach towards Hammamet, anyone staying on this stretch of coast should visit the ancient city of Sousse. Its natural harbour and central position, have attracted, over the centuries, Romans, Byzantines, Vandals and Arabs. Today, the old medina, on the hillside above the port, is still surrounded by a sturdy stone wall and battlements, and the skyline is a jumble of minarets and towers. Yet the pavement opposite the Place Farhat Hached is lined with cafés and restaurants, and the atmosphere is relaxed and sophisticated. It could easily be Marseilles.

Here, wealthy Tunisians and tourists sip espressos, smoke cigarettes and watch the world go by — including the trains that trundle through the middle of town.

Inside the old medina is the Great Mosque, founded in the 9th century, and beyond are the narrow alleyways and lanes of the bazaar: figs and spices, leather and clothes, jewellery and watches, souvenirs and perfumes entice the senses. Butchers' stalls display a cow's head with a blade of grass hanging out of its mouth, like James Dean with a cigarette. Yet what makes Sousse special are the numerous stone steps that rise steeply from the port. The panorama from the top is stunning, encompassing the medina, the port and the sparkling Mediterranean.

In the top corner of the medina is the kasbah, which grew up around the huge Khalef Tower. Today, this former fort houses the city museum (entry is via Boulevard Marechal Tito). Exhibits include Roman statues and superb mosaics illustrating daily life and the local animals and fish. Like many of the archaeological sites in Tunisia, Sousse museum has the bonus of a pleasant, leafy courtyard and a large, shady, relaxing tea garden.

Beyond Sousse, one of the most stunning sights is the huge, well-preserved 2nd-century amphitheatre at El Jem, which can be reached by bus, *louage* (shared taxi) or train. The 30,000-seat amphitheatre dominates the town. Inside, the site is a maze of archways and passages, balconies and seats, buttresses and chambers. But it's hard to envisage the gory Roman spectacles that were held here — animals pitted against men, Christians slaughtered.

A short journey from El Jem is Mahdia, a fishing town built on a peninsula on the Sachel coast. In the 10th century, Mahdia was the capital of the Fatimids, who ruled Tunisia and later Egypt. A huge wall was built across the headland and the only entrance was through a massive stone gate, and then a long, dark passage.

The Spanish destroyed the walls of Mahdia in 1554, but you can still enter the old town through a 16th century reconstruction of the gateway and get some idea of how intimidating it must have been.

Inside, is the old medina with stone slab pavements, a few small mosques and numerous weaving workshops.

The centre of the medina is the Place du Caire, a cool, leafy square where old men sit drinking tea and smoking water pipes. Beyond is the Great Mosque and, further on, the hilltop fort.

Near the fort, excavations of ancient buildings are being carried out. However, the fort itself is only worth a visit for the view from its battlements. Immediately below are the narrow streets of the old town, but stretching into the distance an array of tourist hotels spreads out along the coastline in the direction of Monastir.

El Jem and Mahdia can be visited easily on the same day, but one other "must" trip from Sousse requires at least a full day to do it justice. About an hour's drive from Sousse is Kairouan, the holy city of Tunisia and fourth in Islam (after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem). The city was founded by Oqba Ibn Nafi in AD 670 and became the capital of the Aghlabids, the Arab rulers of Tunisia. It was once said that seven visits here were worth one to Mecca and, up until late last century, Christians could obtain entry only with an official permit.

Here, few concessions are made to tourists and the character is unmistakably old and venerable, with several impressive gateways still standing. Most tourists arrive at the Place des Martyrs, near the Bab ech Chouhada gate. There is a large square here with several outdoor cafés.

Near the mosque ticket office are the Aghlabid Pools, built in the 9th century in the hope that they would produce humidity and reduce the summer heat. The plan backfired because the pools became a breeding ground for mosquitoes which spread malaria.

Of the many places to visit here, the best is the Barber Mosque, a short distance along the Avenue de la Republique. This is an exquisite place with wonderful mosaics of coloured tiles, stucco carved ceilings, decorative lamps, archways, cool courtyards and carpet-floored chambers. Abû Zama el Belaoui, one of the companions of the Prophet, is buried here, and the wealth of carpets is explained by the tradition that the young girls of the city present the first carpet they make to the mosque.

At the opposite end of the medina, through a maze of alleyways, is the Great Mosque, a large and powerful structure, surprisingly simple and bare after the Barber Mosque. It is worth visiting, if only to see the white and blue-washed houses along the way, and the extravagant doorways with their carved lintels and ornate wooden doors. The louvred shutters of the upper storeys indicate the French influence.

The Great Mosque was built mostly in AD 836. Inside, a huge open courtyard and a large prayer which is a forest of columns and candelabra. Local tradition says that anybody who counts them all will turn blind.

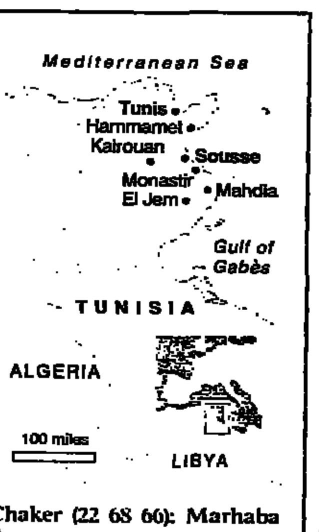
Back near the Bab ech Chouhada is the ornate Ghariani Mosque and the Bir Barouta, which, though it looks like a mosque, is a well. At the top of a rickety flight of stairs a camel tramps endlessly round, drawing up holy water. It's said that those who drink the water will one day return to Kairouan — but diarrhoea would seem a much more likely result.

Further from Sousse, but worth the journey, are the caves and ruins of Cap Bon peninsula, the fantastic Roman sites near Le Kef, and the ancient ruins of Carthage, which spread among the modern villas north of Tunis.

But before leaving Sousse, be sure to walk through the narrow stone door of the Ribat, a 9th-century fortified monastery, and climb to the top of the tower for a final view of the city. Below is the courtyard of the Great Mosque, and the fortified city wall. Beyond, ships lie tied up in port — and, once again, the beaches of the Med beckon.

RICHARD MOVERLEY

TUNISIA FACT BOX



■ Getting there: A return flight from London to Tunis with Air France (0181-742 6600) via Paris costs from £192, plus tax. Alitalia (0171-602 7111) via Rome from £179, plus tax. The nearest airport to Sousse is at Monastir.

■ Airtours (01706 240033) offers seven-day packages to Tunisia in April from £159. Panorama Holidays (01273 206531) offers a seven-night stay at Les Citronniers Hotel in Hammamet for £149. In June, Wigmore Holidays (0171-486 4425) offers a week's half-board at the three-star Marhaba Hotel in Sousse from £329.

■ Getting around. Within Tunisia, *louages* (shared taxis) are the quickest and most convenient form of transport. The train is cheap and comfortable but slow and infrequent: Sousse to Mahdia takes 90 minutes and costs about £3. The bus to Kairouan takes 90 minutes and costs about £2. Try to find a seat on the shady side.

■ What to eat and drink: One of the pleasures of a trip to Tunisia is the opportunity to sample French cuisine at a fraction of the usual price. Sousse is well-known for its seafood. Tunisian dishes worth trying include the thick *chorba* soups, *couscous*, the local semolina dish; *merguez*, a spicy sausage, and *shawarma* kebabs. The local wine is excellent.

■ Prices: Even in the centre of Tunis a good meal costs under £2 and a night's stay at large colonial-style hotels (such as the Claridge in Sousse) is about £5 per person.

■ Where to stay: Hotels cost from £10 per room at the Emira, 52 rue de France (22 63 25); Claridge, 10 Avenue Bourguiba (22 47 59). From £30 per room at Nour Justinia, Avenue Hedi Chaker (22 68 60); Marhaba Club, Bld 7 Novembre (24 21 70).

■ Reading: *Tunisia, The Rough Guide* (£10.99); *Rome in Africa*, by Susan Raven (Routledge, £14.99).

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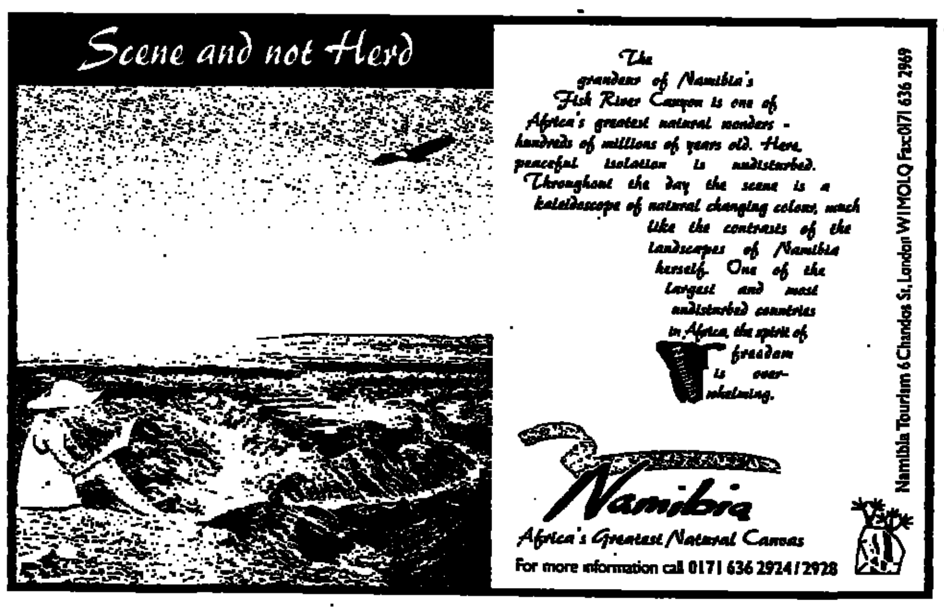
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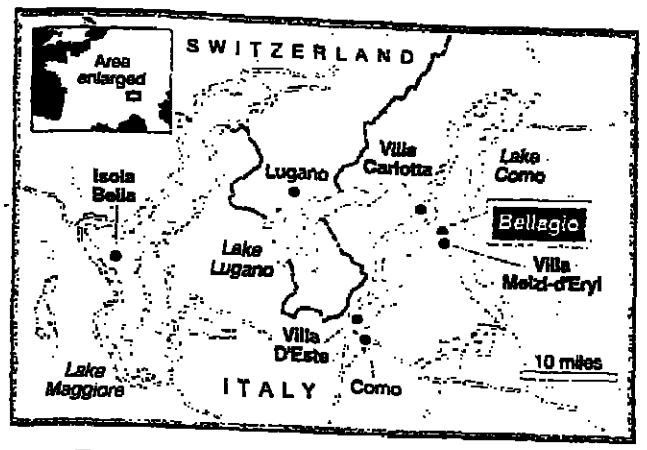


One more cornetto – after the garden

Isola Bella is a pleasure galley of a garden. Its stone terrace bows out through the cool, blue water of Lake Maggiore carrying a revel of gods, goddesses and unicorns. Bishop Burnet, visiting the island in 1684, wrote that it was "worthy of fairies, who have transported here a portion of the ancient gardens of Hesperides". I had hoped it would have a kind of Disney appeal for my children, aged five and six. White peacocks strutted past terracotta pots spilling over with pomegranates but the children had eyes only for some mangey kittens.

It was the 17th-century Villa Carlotta on Lake Como which struck a note for the children, and there were pleas to return there, despite the ice-cream, which was "disgusting".

This end of Lake Como, one of the deepest lakes in Europe at 410m, with its rich soil and abundant fishing, has attracted settlements since the Bronze Age. The Plinys, elder and younger, had a villa here, the Comoedia, and today the lake edges are dotted with statusful villas.

My heart was stolen by the steep, southerly gardens at Villa Carlotta, although it was August and so there was not a flower to be seen on the 150 varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas. But the long citrus tunnel to the front of the house burgeoned, the beeches wept copiously and the tulip trees, oaks, cork, camphor and myrrh trees were huge, magnificent specimens.

The children were mesmerised by Adamo Tadolini's (or school of) *Eros and Psyche*, whose delicate pure white marble forms came alive against the pale blue interior, and Francesco Hayez's romantic *Juliet's Last Kiss*. "Yuk, he *kissed* her," was the response.

Our holiday was on the basis that the children would get lots of swimming but only one ice-cream a day, and I would get gardens. We stayed in Bellagio at the Belvedere, a family-run hotel on a spur jutting scenically out into the fork of Lake Como. I could have asked for no better. Even the Villa D'Este, a boat ride away and one of the world's most opulent hotels, did not have such fine views.

From our hotel dining room and the terrace restaurant below were heart-catching views across the lake to glacier-carved crags. Shelley's love affair with this lake came alive. The weather seemed to change by the second, transforming the hills and lake from menacing to magical. Sometimes cloud would settle below us, giving a celestial view across whiteness; the sunset would usually bring a momentary stillness to the clatter of knives and forks and, when for two nights thunderstorms rent the velvet blue sky, guests stood in the rain to watch the heavenly light show.

Twenty minutes walk from the hotel is the neo-Classical 19th-century Villa Melzi-d'Eryl, with an azalea plantation, a modest water garden and a blue and white gazebo with views across the lake. The garden is beside the municipal lido, which has a decent pizza and ice-cream parlour.

Our routine was simple: breakfast, then down the steep, cobbled streets past the bakery shops of such wondrous confections there was a pause for window shopping, past the shop selling expensive hand-made toys, past the Basilica of San Giacomo, where we lit candles and said a prayer, and out through the other side of the town to the harbour and a small pebble beach, where glamorous Italian mothers smoothed thighs with sun lotion and watched their children swimming.

Lunch was a pizza or a picnic, then back to the hotel pool. In the afternoon the date with an ice-cream parlour took us back to the town, where the home-made ice-cream is outstanding. So, too, the shops. A photographer's shop with pictures of Bellagio in the 1950s — John Kennedy and troops of chic, sunglassed women who seem to have left their mark on the town: clothes shops breathtaking in the grandeur of their stock, and prices.

Apart from the Venetian glass frogs/cats/horses there was some pretty, modern, silver jewellery and carnelian pendants, which seduced the children's holiday money.

Thomson Holidays arranges trips every day, at an extra cost. This is how we got to the gorgeous Isola Bella, though I wished I hadn't put the children through the coach journey of several hours. That was the most ambitious outing on offer, and there were far easier trips of an hour or so to see chocolate factories or go to Switzerland. Next time.

JANE OWEN

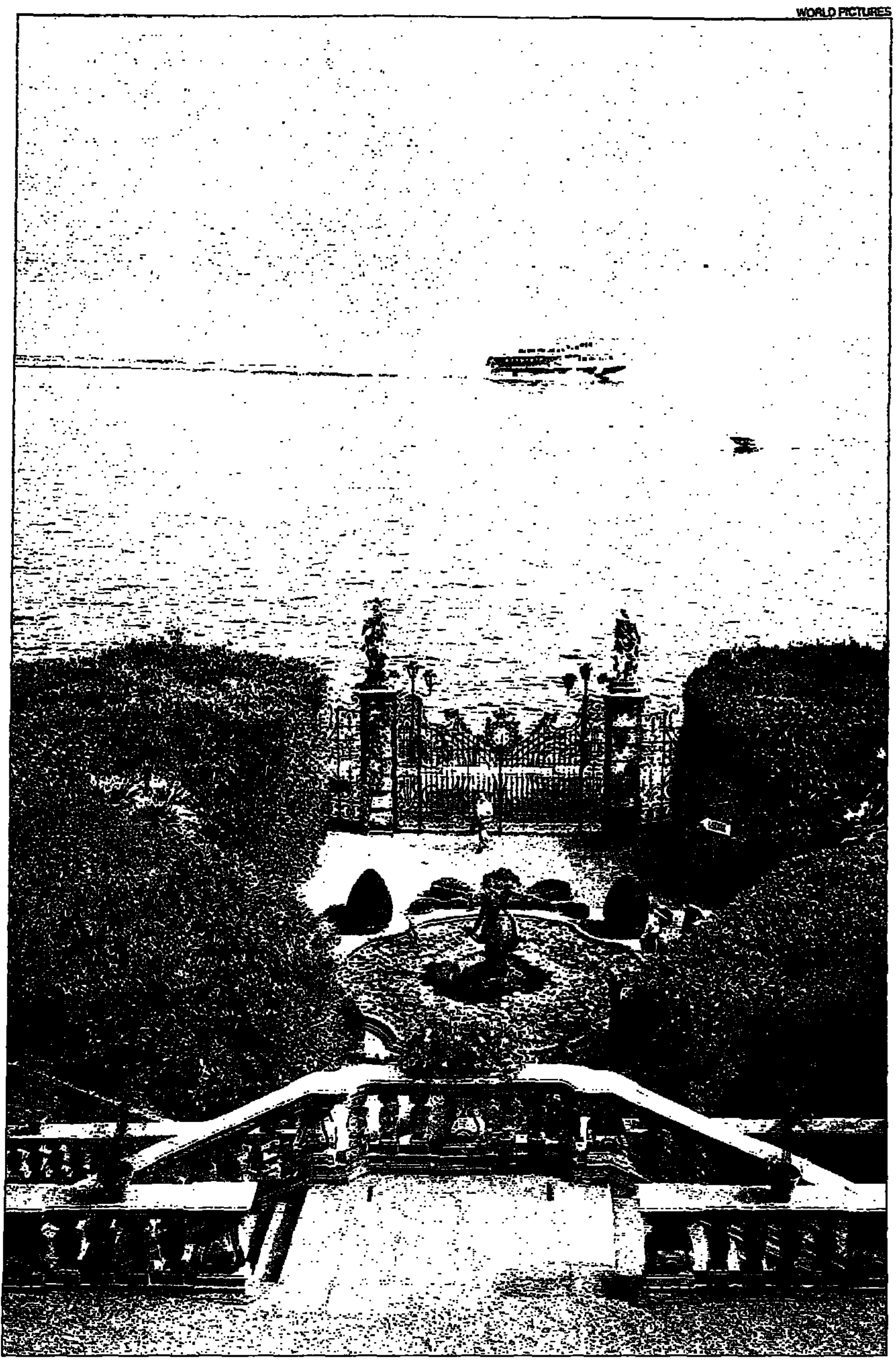
● *The author was a guest of Thomson Holidays.*

FACT FILE

Jetties on Lake Como

- *Thomson Holidays* (0990 502565) offers seven nights at the *Belvedere Hotel*, Bellagio, from £431 (children from £224), with flights, transfers and half board.
- Tourist information on 00 39 31 950 204.
- Reading: *The Italians*, by Luigi Barzini (Penguin, £8.99). *Eating Out in Italy*, by Diane Seed (Rosendale Press, £11.95). *Lombardy, Milan and the Italian Lakes*, by Dana Facaros and Michal Pauls (Cadogan, £12.99). *Italy: Eyewitness Travel Guide* (Dorling Kindersley, £20).

WORLD PICTURES



The gardens at Villa Carlotta on Lake Como burgeon with rhododendrons and azaleas, tulip, camphor and myrrh trees

Popping about old Pompeii

My Italian barber's face erupted into a smile as wide as a comb. "Pompeii?" he said. "Then you must go to Ischia. It is an island with a volcano in the Bay of Naples. It is a paradise."

The next ten minutes were laced with tales of *Lachryma Christi* (wine), *limoncello* (liqueur), grapes, peaches, stewed rabbit, sulphur and thermal baths. Suddenly our family holiday, planned as a supplement to the Cambridge Latin Course, Part 1, seemed more enticing. We were headed towards a region still throbbing with volcanic pleasures.

The bus to Vesuvius leaves from Ercolano station and hairpins up the mountain, past prickly pears and vineyards. From the crater rim the view is astonishing. To the right, the sprawl of Naples. In front, the bay, curving left along the hilly Amalfi peninsula, with Capri at its tip, and on the other side Ischia, lost in the mist.

Below, to the left, Pompeii is just a distant blur in the urban network. How could Vesuvius have spat as far as that? With little difficulty — in 1631, its ashes fell on Istanbul.

Revision note: on August 24, AD 79 a mushroom cloud burst from Vesuvius at noon and the sky went dark for days. Pompeii and Herculanaeum, its little neighbour, were obliterated. The Italians are still digging them out.

We started with Herculanaeum, which the children enjoyed, cavorting around the gardens and squirting fountain water. The town was flooded by mud, so the villas and bathhouses still have upper storeys and seem real. You can amble round Herculanaeum in half an hour.

Pompeii, buried under ash and pumice stone, is a vast, roofless maze. Bringing it to life requires an effort, on an August scorcher with your *ragazzi* begging for ice-cream. Look, look, imagine: the streets, the villas, Beware of the Dog mosaics, cartwheel ruts, casts of the dead, theatres, forums, the temple to Vespasian (sainted emperor who introduced the public lavatory), the big willies (sorry, good luck symbols). On which subject, outside a Roman brothel, I heard a guide putting a group of nuns in the picture: yes ladies, these girls were the price of a glass of wine. The nuns just nodded. Like us, they were trying hard inwardly to digest.

A surprise, on the edge of Pompeii, is the Villa of the Mysteries, where the rich wall-paintings seem like a lost link to the Italian renaissance. We villa-hopped some more, until we felt sufficiently like dead Romans. Then we took the jetfoil to Ischia.

Green and fruitful, Ischia was once the culmination of the Grand Tour. It is bigger than Capri and less glamorous — no Gracie Fields, just Ibsen, William Walton and Alan Clark (it's his favourite foreign place). There are pretty wine-growing villages, and little towns with beaches where men fashion wicker lobster pots and women bellow at sandy children from second-floor windows. No opera could wish for a better set, or chorus.

Dominating the island is Mount Epomeo, dormant but still hissing. Its fumaroles fuelled the Roman showers which you can still use, and on some beaches (look for Marina dei Maronti), you can cook potatoes and eggs in the sand, or scorch your toes in the water.

Epomeo erupted about a century after Pompeii, destroying all life on the island. Then, a century ago, it rose again and killed 3,000, in 15 seconds. Now droves of arthritic Germans throng the thermal hotels, but Ischia absorbs them all, with space to spare.

We stayed in Il Monastero, a hotel converted from a ruined monastery, perched high on a rocky outcrop. Above the hotel stands the ruined Castello Aragonese, at which Nelson took some pot shots. Below, in the crypt, are ranks of stone seats where the corpses of nuns — Poor Clares — were left upright to ruminate upon their maker.

On the hotel's terrace overlooking the bay, we followed their example each evening, inspired by ice-cold *limoncello*. Ischia proves that Italians can shake off eruptions when they want to; and after a course of Pompeii it makes a perfect summer pudding.

PETER BROWN

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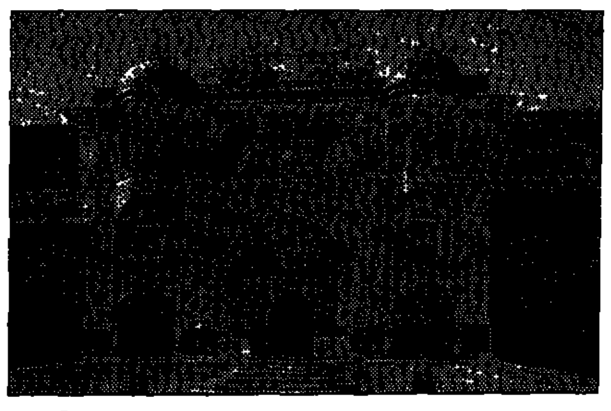

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Obviously, such a trip is not for those who prefer to be cosseted and pampered in ultra-deluxe hotels, require 24 hour room service and all the refinements that a 5 star hotel can offer. Travellers undertaking this tour should appreciate that the accommodation will, in some properties be simple in style and there may only be a limited choice of cuisine. However, the rewards will be immense: the opportunity to stay in a totally unspoilt environment amongst gentle people, a million miles away from the usual 'tourist India' of today.

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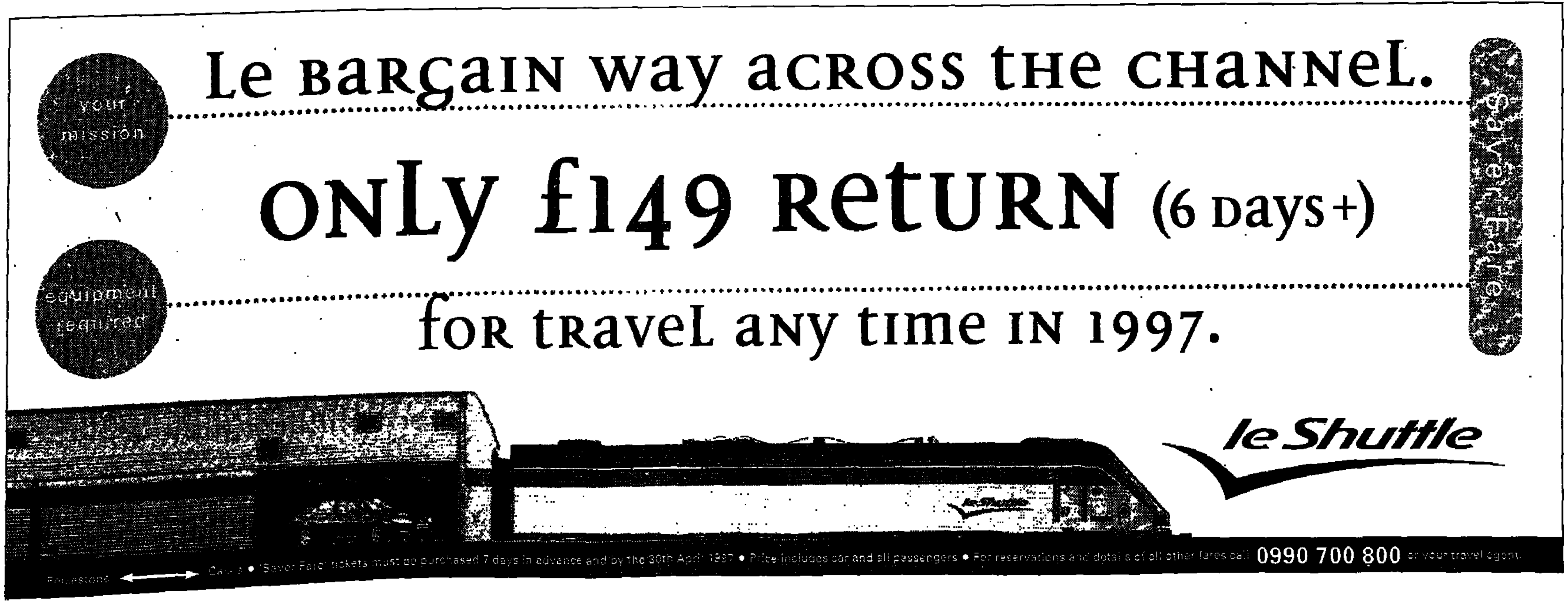

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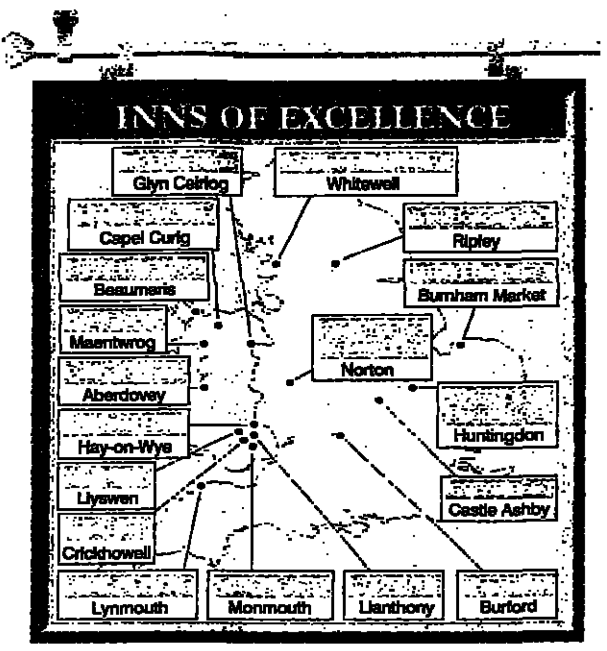
Britain: Where to find outstanding inns in England; plus a pick of the best hostelries in Wales

Drink in the atmosphere

When guests at the Hoste Arms in Norfolk asked their host, Paul Whittome, "where else can we find an inn as good as this?" it set off an idea in his mind that reached fruition this week. The Great Inns of England consortium has launched with just eight members but Mr Whittome and his co-founder, Sir Thomas Ingilby, visited more than 300 establishments in their quest.

Criteria for entry have little to do with tourist board ratings, stars or crowns; the inns should be small and personal (the largest has 26 rooms, the smallest ten), and individually run with high-quality accommodation, a bar for locals as well as visitors to have a pint in, and a restaurant where, according to Mr Whittome, "you never have to wear a tie or talk in hushed whispers over a sculpture on a plate".



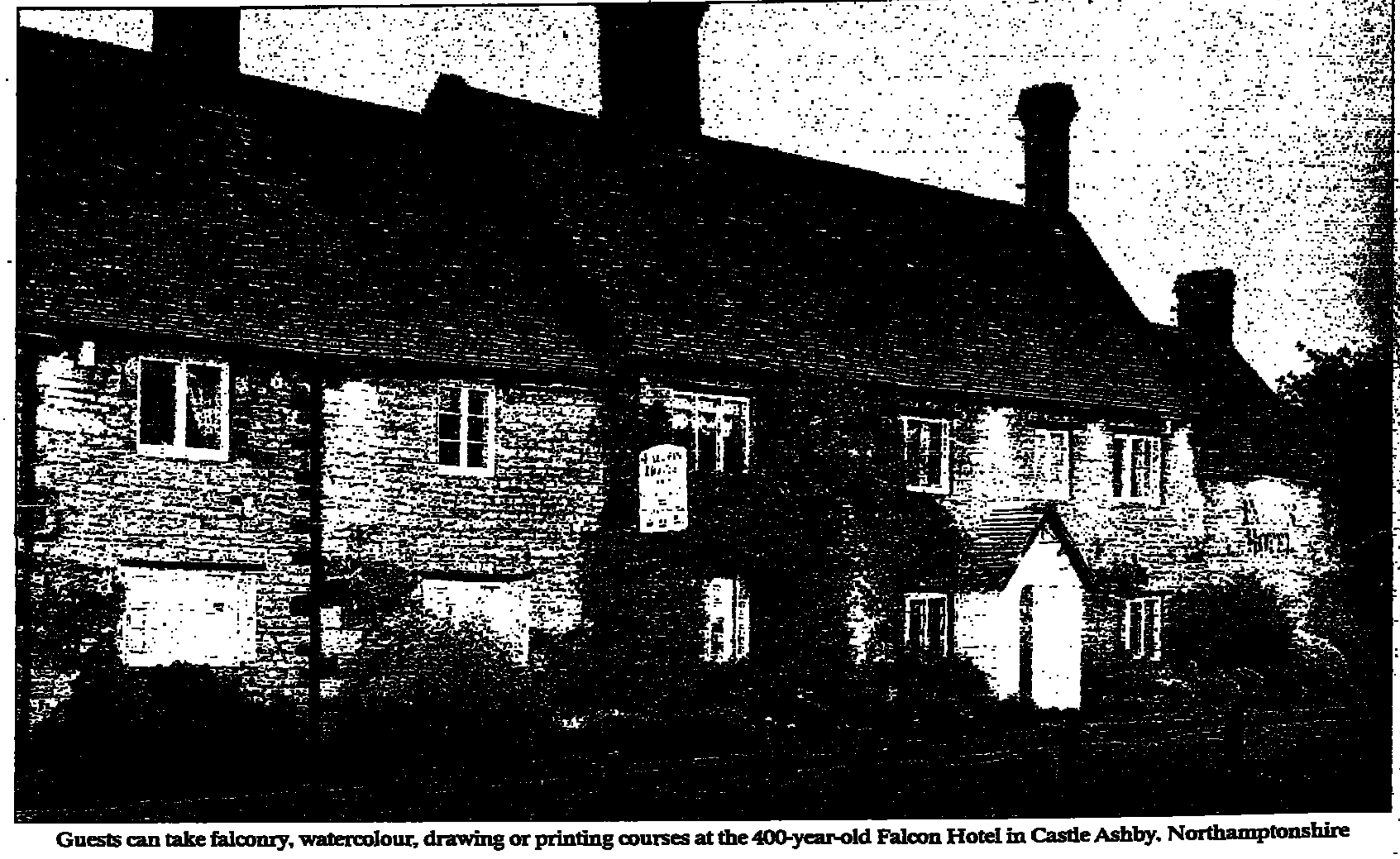
The **Hoste Arms** is where Admiral Nelson, born in nearby Burnham Thorpe, collected his dispatches. Mr Whittome scraped back the chimney walls to their original 400-year-old brick, removed the "improvements" with which the previous brewery owners had tarted up the bars, and searched for solid old pub furniture around the country.

Similar attention was then lavished on the 20 bedrooms, as well as the menus which now feature oriental dishes as well as Brancaster mussels, Burnham oysters and casserole of rabbit with root vegetables — with results that were duly rewarded. The Hoste Arms became Egon Ronay's Pub of the Year for 1996 while the current *Which?* Hotel Guide, never noted for its hyperbole, describes it as a "characterful inn run with passion and commitment".

After his search with Mr Whittome, Sir Thomas Ingilby of the **Boar's Head** in Ripley, has also developed a clear view: "We'd like to represent traditional England, not one that is bottled or preserved. British inns have moved on and now offer fine wine, even avant garde food in informal surroundings."

While the architectural merits of the eight listed inns may vary from the mainly 18th-century red-brick **Hundred House** in Shropshire, which would be easy to pass without a second glance, to the chocolate-box charms of Lynmouth's **Rising Sun**, and interior styles range from the sturdy robustness of the Hoste Arms to the patrician elegance of the Boar's Head, the infectious enthusiasm of the proprietors, mostly the owners; for their own intimate and fascinating little bit of English local history, is an encouraging common denominator.

On Yorkshire's Ripley Castle Estate, where the Ingilby family have lived since 1325, the Boar's Head served as a coaching inn on the Leeds to Edinburgh run, but was closed in 1919 by Sir William Ingilby, unhappy at the way his workers were lured from church. The drought lasted for 75 years until Sir Thomas reopened the inn, adding antiques from Ripley Castle and luring chefs from the Waterside Inn at Bray and the Chester Grosvenor.


Guests can take falconry, watercolour, drawing or printing courses at the 400-year-old Falcon Hotel in Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire

The 14th-century **Inn at Whitewell** in Lancashire's Trough of Bowland is still the property of the Queen as part of the Duchy of Lancaster. Its idiosyncratic proprietor, the former Lancashire cricketer Richard Bowman, says: "I don't want a car park full of BMWs. We're an old inn, not a country house hotel." It picked up the Egon Ronay Pub of the Year Award in the 1997 Guide.

The most celebrated literary pedigree among the Great Inns is claimed by the 14th-century thatched smugglers inn, The Rising Sun at Lynmouth, where R.D. Blackmore wrote part of *Lorna Doone* and Shelley spent his honeymoon with his 16-year-old bride Harriet in 1812. The other 15 bedrooms have recently been renovated.

History and high-quality accommodation — king size beds and four posters, TVs and trouser presses are pretty standard fittings — don't come cheap. The Great Inns brochure surprisingly doesn't quote prices, and its whimsical style may irritate practically minded holidaymakers; but double rooms cost £55-£90 per night per room, with full English breakfast, and evening meals £18-£25, though most of the inns keep costs down by offering cheaper mini-breaks of two nights or more, sometimes themed.

At the 400-year-old **Falcon Hotel** in Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire, guests can join watercolour or drawing weeks, or take courses in falconry.

The other two inns in the consortium are the **Old Bridge Inn** in Cambridgeshire, good for food and wine, and the **Lamb** in Oxfordshire, a smaller, traditional Cotswold inn.

While the Great Inns brochure may fail to indicate prices, it doesn't flaunt the clutch of awards its members have won throughout the 1990s. "We'd like to get away from hotel clichés about views and renowned cuisine," Sir Thomas says.

Buzzwords here are character, quality, fun and informality. Is it perhaps rather depressing, though, that so far the Great Inns of England are only in single figures?

JILL CRAWSHAW

GREAT INNS OF ENGLAND

■ The Hoste Arms, Burnham Market, Norfolk (01328 738777).
The Boar's Head, Ripley, Yorkshire (01423 771888).
The Rising Sun, Lynmouth, Devon (01598 753223).
The Old Bridge Hotel, Huntingdon, Cambs (01480 452681).
The Falcon Hotel, Castle Ashby, Northants (01604 696200).
The Inn at Whitewell, Whitewell, Lancs (01200 448222).
The Lamb Inn, Burford, Oxfordshire (01993 823155).
The Hundred House Hotel, Norton, Shropshire (01952 730353).

■ *Free copies of the brochure, from:* The Great Inns of England, Ripley Castle, Near Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 3AY.

On Borrowed time

At the time that George Borrow undertook his great trek in search of Wild Wales in 1854, he liked nothing better than to fetch up in some village inn, where he would settle by a welcoming fire, order a quart of ale and engage in lively conversations with the natives.

Commendably, the erudite Norfolk chronicler had taken the trouble to master the Welsh language, but such application is no longer demanded of the casual visitor eager to share in the general conviviality.

The following establishments are just the kind Borrow might, and in some cases did, patronise. They are essentially "locals", frequented by the natives, but offering any traveller, who might drop in for a drink and find the company congenial, the possibility of a night's lodging. All prices are for single B&B.

Quite the most unusual is the **Abbey Hotel** (01873 890487 — £21) overlooking the mountain road between Hay and Abergavenny. Situated in the prior's house among the ruins of the 12th century Llanthony Abbey, the pub is in a vaulted crypt at the bottom of a flight of stone steps.

On a recent visit the dimly-lit interior was black with clerics attending an ecclesiastical convention. Sadly, the hotel is open only at weekends until the end of March.

Roger Thomas, co-author of *Great Little Places*, an annual publication listing 50 small, friendly places to stay in the Principality, makes no apologies for recommending his local, the **Bear** in Crickhowell (01873 810408 — from £42).

In 1993 the Bear was named best pub in Britain and the cobbled forecourt and a 19th-century timetable displayed in the bar are reminders that this 500-year-old building was formerly a coaching inn on what is now the A40. In its low-beamed bar you are likely to find visitors from the United States and Japan mingling with the locals.

RICHARD STOCKTON

The landlord of the Griffin Inn at Brecon is a fishing fan

The slate-floored bar of the **Pen-y-Gwryd** inn, near Capel Curig (01286 870211 — £20) in the heart of Snowdonia, doubles as a mountain rescue post. It was here the 1953 conquest of Everest was plotted and team members who scrawled their autographs on the bar ceiling for posterity included Edmund Hillary and John Hunt.

Customers at the **Griffin** at Llyswen (01874 754241 — £34.50) are left in no doubt over the sporting preferences of proprietor Richard Stockton. Rooms are named after fishing flies and the country inn theme is carried through into the kitchen, where traditional local ingredients, of course, include salmon.

The Woolpack Inn (01691 718382 — £28) at Glyn Ceiriog, just south of Llangollen provided Borrow with shelter from the rain in 1854. The landlady had a wooden leg and was extremely courteous. Her successor, Sandra Usher, has two perfectly good legs but is no less attentive. Her partner, Peter, the chef, makes extensive use of produce from neighbouring farms.

Samuel Johnson and Dickens were among guests at the **Olde Bull's Head** in Beaumaris on the Isle of Anglesey (01248 810239 — £45), but Oliver Cromwell's forces are said to have been less considerate and commandeered the place during the Civil War.

As a Welsh speaker, Robert Hughes at the **Penhelig Arms** at Aberdovey (01654 767215 — £39) is something of a curiosity in the Principality's licensing trade, which is dominated by what Borrow would have termed Saxons. It is the AA Welsh hotel of the year.

It is ten years since Bob and Jane Evans resurrected the 450-year-old **Village Green** at Trellech (01600 860119 — £22.50) near Monmouth. They bought it from the Official Receiver and spent £250,000 refurbishing it.

To find a hotel in Hay-on-Wye that on closer inspection does not turn out to have been converted into a bookshop is something of a relief. **Kilverts** (01497 821042 — £25) survives and enjoys a good local trade — always a recommendation. Festival of literature regulars book for the following year before checking out.

Borrow was impressed with the **Grapes** at Maentwrog in Gwynedd (01766 590208 — £25) where he fell into discussion with a guest on the subject of predestination. What neither of them could have foreseen was the fact that the inn was destined 140 years later to win the title of best free house in Britain.

ALAN ROAD

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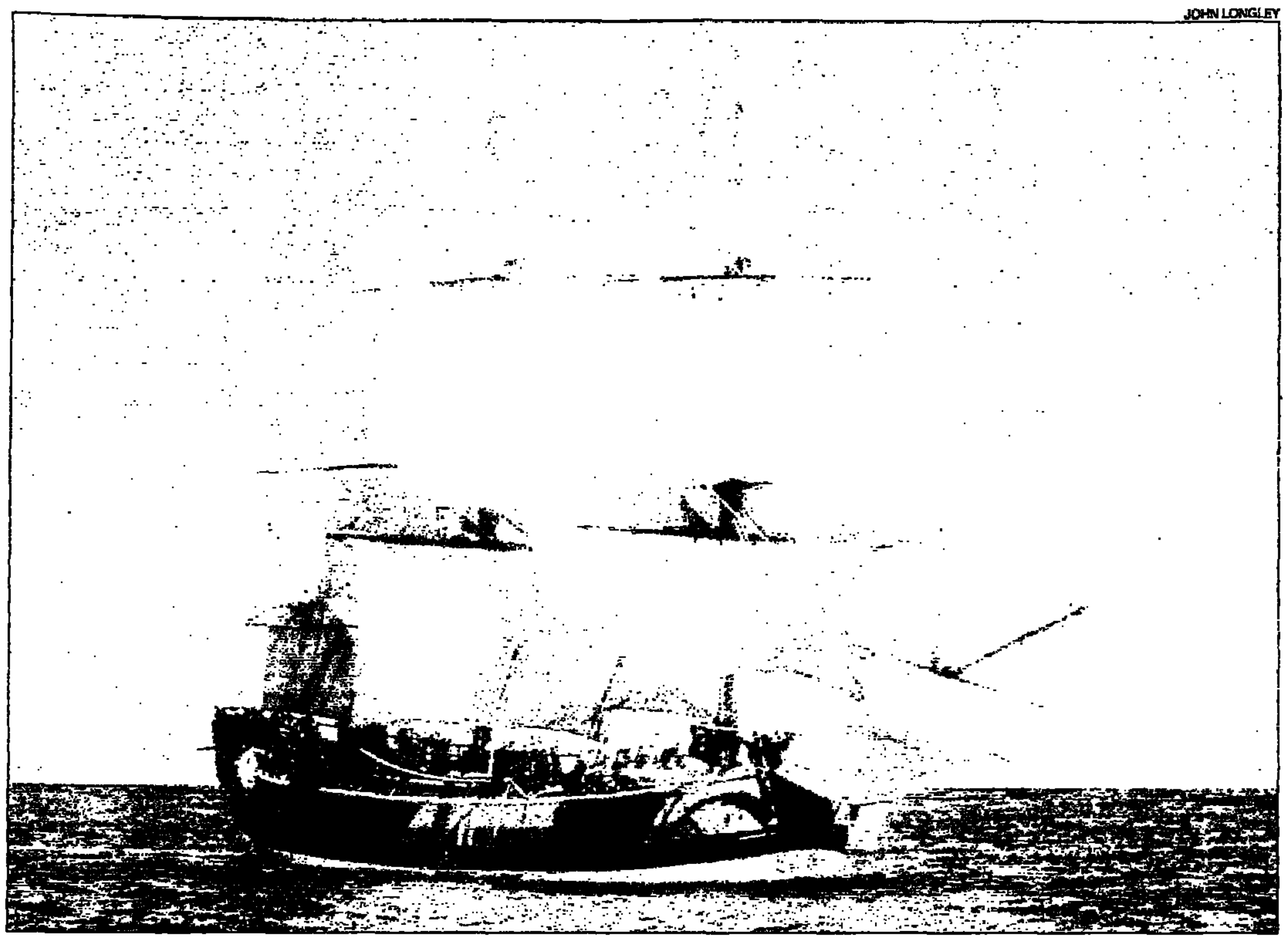
Britain: A report from the replica of Captain Cook's *Endeavour* as it heads for a voyage around these shores

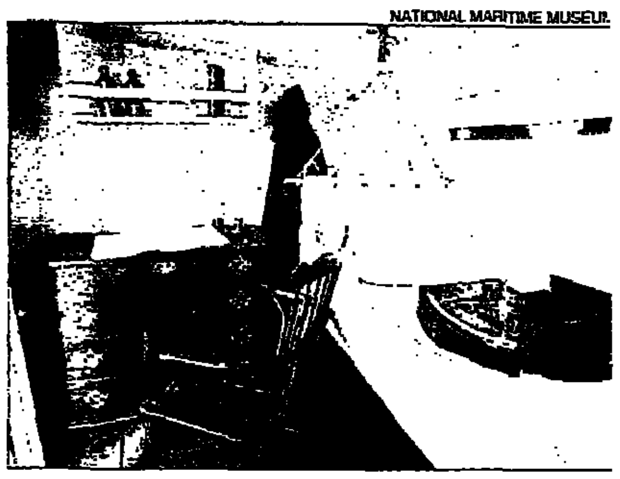
Cook's tour is the sail of the century

Captain Cook portrait, 1776



JOHN LONGLEY

Wind power: the 20th-century *Endeavour*, now sailing between Tenerife and Madeira; it left Fremantle, Australia, nearly five months ago



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

Replica of the cabin used by Mr Green, an astronomer

When Captain Cook's *Endeavour* left Plymouth for Tahiti on August 25, 1768, the ship had a crew of 94. At the end of the three-year expedition only 41 sailors had survived to tell the tale. Our ship, an authentic replica of Cook's *Endeavour*, measuring only 109ft by 29ft, was built from the original plans kept at the National Maritime Museum in London. So far, since leaving Fremantle, Australia, five months ago, the entire crew of 52 men and women from Australia, New Zealand, Britain and South Africa are still very much alive.

The ship is now heading for Britain and will be on view from March to October all around our coast. Indeed, tall-ship enthusiasts can book themselves on to the *Endeavour* for a three to 11-day voyage.

The *Endeavour* is operated in the same way as in Cook's day. We use wind power, but have modern engines to boost our speed if the wind drops and to steady our passage in a storm. Life below decks is much the same as the original. The 36-strong amateur crew sleep in hammocks — just like Cook's sailors — crowded together in the lower deck, with a head height of only 4ft 6in. The 14 professional crew sleep in the cabins that were occupied by Cook's sailmaker, bosun, clerk, gunner and carpenter.

The ship's master, Chris Blake, and a party of three passengers who have paid up to £25,000 each for the entire journey, sleep in swinging cots in the more spacious gentlemen's cabins on the after fall deck. These cabins were originally occupied by a Mr Green, an astronomer, and Joseph Banks, who led the scientific party. However, unlike Cook, who had to rely on the sun, the stars and his nose to chart his passage, our captain has the latest satellite communications, weather fax, collision radar and a Global Positioning System.

While Cook pioneered the use of lime juice to combat scurvy, and was the first to make a long voyage and not lose a man to this disease, his crew often had to endure the delights of salted meat, fermenting apples and biscuits riddled with weevils. Hidden away in the hold of our ship, where the original *Endeavour* stored supplies for its three-year voyage, we have a modern electric galley, a well stocked freezer, a proper mess room and enough fresh food to enable our chef to serve up three hearty meals a day — but we do suffer a hardship that Cook's sailors did not have to bear. *This is a dry ship.* No alcohol is allowed, unless the captain invites guests to his cabin for a token glass of wine.

We are observing an 18th-century way of life, not 20th-century. *Life aboard this ship* is simple: it consists of sailing, working, eating, sleeping and yarning with your mates. We read, paint, write, sing or play any musical instruments we have brought on board.

On a typical day at sea, we rise at seven, store the hammocks and eat breakfast. The morning programme usually involves sail handling, ship's husbandry and lectures. Professor Tim Beaglehole, the Cook authority and publisher of *The Journals of Captain James Cook*, is on board as resident historian.

After lunch our time is usually devoted to ship maintenance — tarring, rigging, sail and rope work, sailing and painting. Towards the end of the day, sail is usually shortened for the night. The evening meal is served and hammocks are slung before we turn in at 9.30pm.

Keeping watch continues round the clock. In this part of the world the warm, clear night is enough to make anyone want to circumnavigate the world.

Tonight, God willing, we should be safely anchored in Funchal harbour, Madeira. On Wednesday the ship sets sail on the last leg of its journey to Britain, arriving for Easter. More than two centuries on, the *Endeavour* is coming home.

RONALD GRIBBLE

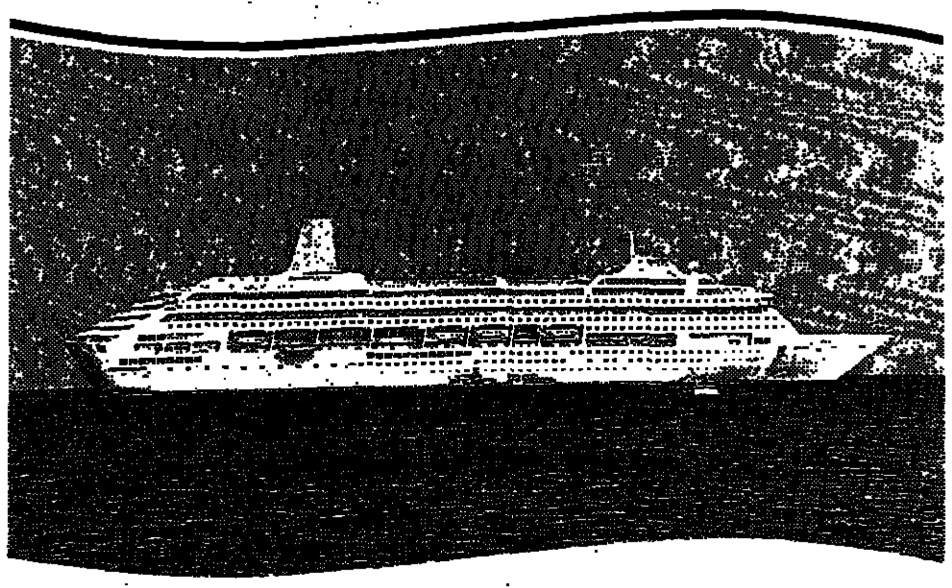
- *The author flew to Tenerife courtesy of Iberia Airlines (0171-830 0011) and will return from Madeira courtesy of TAP Air Portugal (0171-828 0262).*
- *Members of the public who would like to join the ship on its UK tour should ring the Endeavour Foundation (0181-293 5522). Fees are from £900 to £1,200 for a three to four-day trip to £4,400 for an 11-day voyage.*

ENDEAVOUR FACT FILE

■ When it reaches London on March 25, the *Endeavour* will travel under Tower Bridge in full sail and firing its cannon. At Greenwich it will be open to the public, dressed with artefacts as if Cook and his crew had gone ashore. Visitors will be able to see the conditions under which Cook's pioneering voyages of exploration were made.

■ To coincide with the *Endeavour*'s arrival at Greenwich, the National Maritime Museum is to stage a Captain Cook exhibition in the Queen's House and a Cook statue will be unveiled in the museum grounds.

■ The *Endeavour* will be open to the public at Greenwich from March 28 to April 13. The ship will then call at various ports: Great Yarmouth (April 19-28); Boston (May 2-5); Whitby, home port of the original *Endeavour* (May 10-18); Leith, Edinburgh (May 24-June 1); Inverness (June 7-15); Greenock (June 28-July 6); Liverpool (July 11-20); Fishguard (July 26-August 3); Falmouth (August 9-17); Plymouth (August 23-31); Weymouth (September 6-9); Brighton (September 13-21); St Helier, Jersey (September 27-October 5) and St Malo (October 7-12), before returning to Plymouth on October 17, where it will be prepared for a voyage to the United States.



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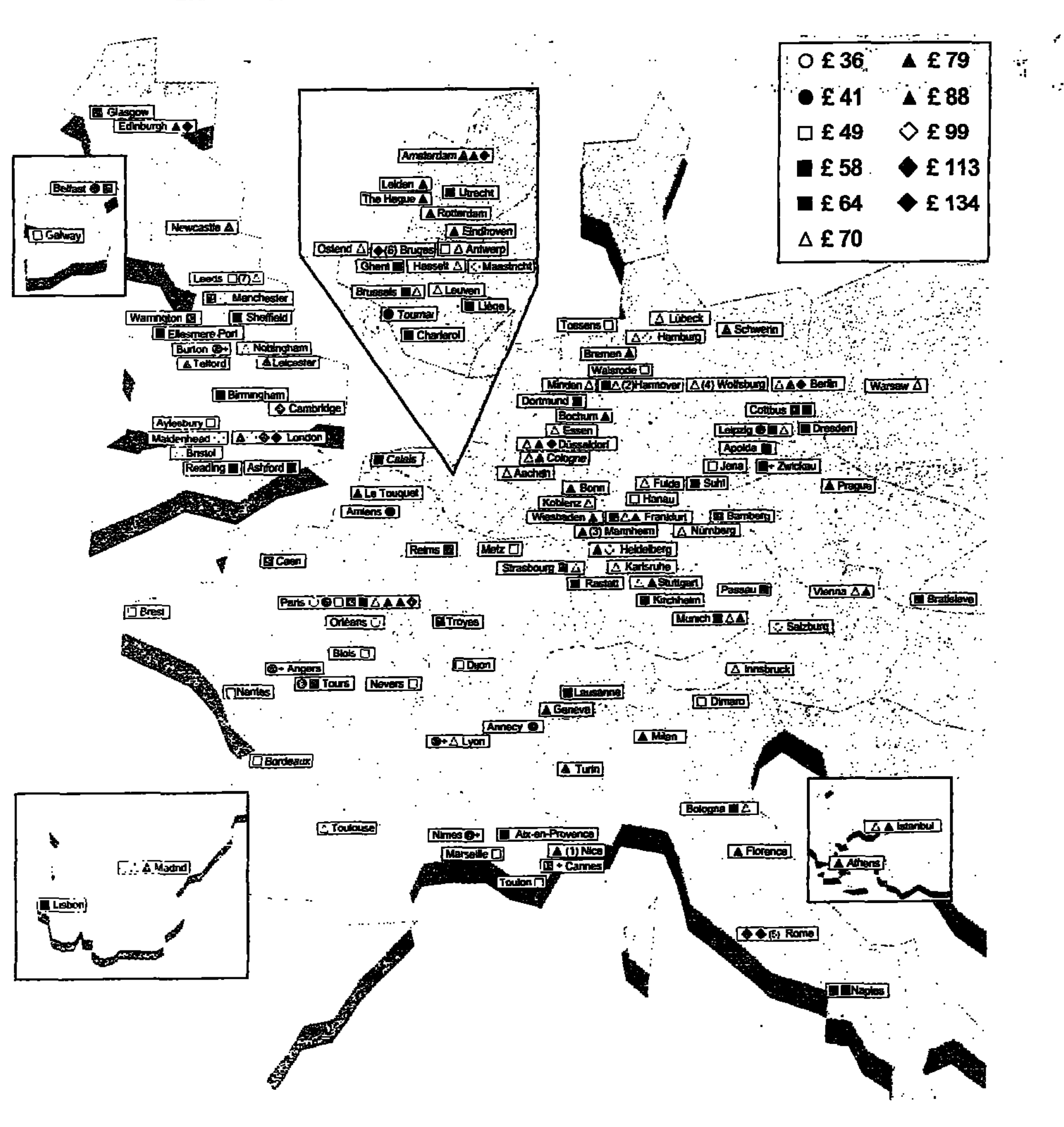

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Skiing: When family holidays become cripplingly expensive, an all-inclusive break may be the answer

Clowning in Chamonix

Someone must have heard that my French was getting rusty. Last winter I was packed off to Club Med in Chamonix to see if its "all-inclusive" ski holiday was value for money and how I got on with the French in their oldest ski resort. Chamonix lies close to the start of the *Vallée Blanche*, the famous glacier run which I had always wanted to tackle.

With many European lift passes now costing up to £150 a week, ski schools about £90 and the basic cost of flights and a week's half board holiday at least £500 to £800, family skiing is now cripplingly expensive. Some tour operators such as Club Med are, therefore, packaging an all-inclusive holiday which covers all the above, a full lunch on the mountain, wine with the midday and evening meals, and child-care. The extras are hire of skis and boots and *pre/post dinner drinks*.

Club Med says that its all-inclusive holiday in Chamonix works out at £761, while the full cost of a similar seven-day holiday with a rival operator could be more than £1,000.

Traditionally, Club Med conjures up visions of straw huts by beaches, people paying with beads and gastronomic French food — chic but expensive and unnerving for Brits with rusty O-level French. But now the club wants to show that it is international, affordable and can offer different types of holiday.

In Chamonix, the club is a large, rather basic hotel — no television sets or minibars in rooms — right by the small Savoy nursery slope. It has a Baby and Mini Club so that parents can leave their children with professionals during the day. There is also a large underground theatre for live entertainment in the evenings. This is put on by the club's young *gentils organisateurs* — ski guides, child minders and reps — who clearly enjoy the singing and dancing, mime shows and skits which are semi-professionally staged each night.

Although it tries hard to be pan-European, Club Med in Chamonix retains a strong Gallic streak, which may or may not be to everyone's liking. Most of its *gentils organisateurs* speak good English, but what makes the village different is the emphasis on keeping children happy. The club's resident clown/animateur, Mario, would often wander around the main dining room (there was also a smaller, quieter one), either on stilts or dressed as a hairy waitress, dropping plates and clowning it to screams of delight from the children.

After a faltering start in speaking French, I was relieved to find Club Med herding all the English speaking guests *(gentils membres)* into one group. By then we had all been fitted with skis and boots, and had been asked to estimate our skiing ability.

We were then taken up in the bubble lift to the main *skiing area above Chamonix* at Planpraz, where the Club Med instructors checked each guest's ability and we were introduced to Sylphie, our French ski instructress.

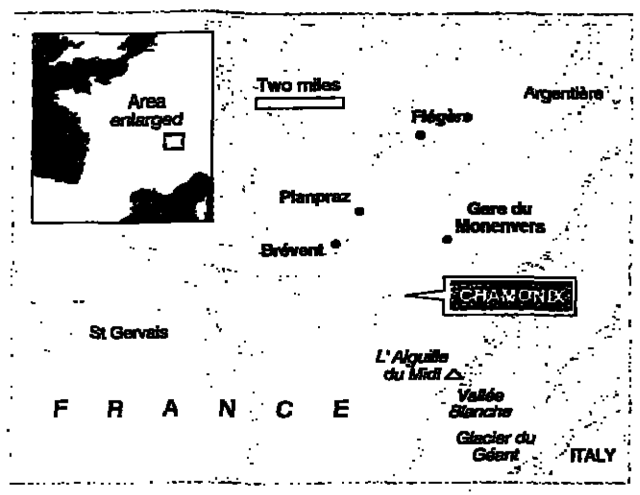
The drawback of skiing in Chamonix is that the ski areas are dispersed up and down the valley and not yet linked by lifts. Serious piste bashers will ski out the Brévent and Planpraz area in a day, and it is annoying that the Flégère area, the next up the valley, has not been linked to Planpraz. This is where an all-inclusive holiday comes in handy, because Club Med buses its guests to Flégère and, later in the week, to Argentière, a far more exciting and bigger ski area overlooking the Vallée Blanche.

While the skiing above Chamonix is passable, it is the *start of the 20km descent down* the Vallée Blanche. This turned out to be an expensive non-event. It costs £62 to get up to the L'Aiguille du Midi, at 3,842m, and then to be guided *down the run. The panoramas* at L'Aiguille du Midi are breathtaking, but you are then roped to the next person to *walk down a 100m ridge to the* beginning of the piste down to the Glacier du Geant. From then on the skiing is mostly gentle blue runs until every skier on the mountain converges *on a narrow couloir* down the side of a huge cascade of vast ice blocks. This bottleneck, and the last part of *the run down to the Gare du* Montenvers is unexceptional.

Back in Chamonix, you are again reminded what a beautiful old town this is, with its Alpine Museum, fast-flowing *river and blazing gas torches* which light up smart restaurants and interesting old shops. While Chamonix may *not be a Courchevel or Val* d'Isère, it has a charm of its own and Club Med's all-inclusive holiday with superb food was good value.

Alastair Brett

● *The author was guest of Club Med.*



CLUB MED FACT FILE

■ Club Med, 106 Brompton Road, London SW3 1JJ (0171-581 1161). Prices for its village in Chamonix, France: adult all-inclusive price from £761; babies from £116; children six to nine from £645; 50 per cent off children's prices on certain dates; reductions for family rooms.

■ Other "family" tour operators: Ski Esprit, Oaklands, Reading Road North, Fleet, Hampshire GU13 8AA (01252 616789); Ski Famille, Unit 9, Chesterton Mill, French's Road, Cambridge CB4 3NP (01223 363777); Ski Hillwood, 2 Field End Road, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 2QL (0181-866 9993).

FORMULE TRIDENT

Bring on the clowns: that's what Club Med does at Chamonix to entertain its guests. But don't be fooled: behind the mask is an expert skier

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WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 25

BRETWALDA

(b) The title given in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to Egbert of Wessex (802-839) and seven earlier English kings, who exercised a supremacy, often rather shadowy, over other English kings south of the Humber. The title *probably means "overlord of the Brits". It was sometimes assumed by* later kings.

PENDRAGON

(a) A title conferred on several British chiefs in times of great danger when they were invested with supreme power. Especially, in Arthurian romances, to Uther Pendragon, father of King Arthur. The word is Welsh *pen* head + *dragon* (referring to the war chief's dragon standard). It corresponded to the Roman *dux bellorum*.

GOLIARDS

(a) Educated jesters and buffoons who wrote ribald Latin verse, and who were *noted for riotous behaviour. They flourished mainly in the 12th and 13th centuries. The word comes from the Old french goliard* a glutton, derived from the Latin *gula* a throat, gluttony.

PAVAN

(c) A stately Spanish dance of the 16th and 17th centuries, said to be so called because in it the dancers stalked like peacocks (Latin *pavones*), the gentlemen with their long robes of office, the ladies with trains like peacocks' tails. The pavan, like the minuet, ended with a quick movement called the *galliard*, a sort of gavotte. The etymology is uncertain, and it is also suggested that the name is from *Padova* (Padua).

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SUE GOODCHILD

This painting holiday at Le Petit Bois Gleu in Brittany, France is just one of the many worldwide trips listed in a new directory

Breaks for art lovers

PAINTING holidays in the UK and abroad to destinations as far apart as Andalucia and Bali are listed in the *1997 Painting Holiday Directory*, edited by Anne Hedley. There is even a painting holiday for gourmets based on a former Tarnaise farmhouse at Les Pradailles near Toulouse-Lautrec's birthplace and museum at Albi, with visits to selected restaurants each day after work. The cost, without transport, is £445 full board for a week.

The white villages and flowers of the sierras are the subjects of Spirit of Andalucia's weekly courses, costing £750 and based near Gaucin, with tutor Jenny Jowett in attendance. In June, Andrew John's painting holiday aboard the 30-metre barge *Athos* meanders along the 300-year-old Canal du Midi, through Languedoc's wine country and medieval villages, costing £650 full board for six nights.

The *1997 Painting Holiday Directory* (PHD Publications, £4.50) can be obtained from bookshops, or post free from 01830 540319.

Thai trips

NEW charter flights next winter have considerably trimmed long-haul destination prices from Thomson Holidays (0990 502399). Though the Far East has so far lagged behind the Caribbean in both price and popularity, our largest tour operator hopes that direct flights (13 hours) into Phuket, avoiding the traffic and pollution of Bangkok, will open up Thai resorts to winter sunseekers. A two-week all-inclusive holiday at a four-star hotel on Koh Phi Phi island will be under £1,000, with 12 nights B&B on Phuket and Koh Samui starting at £639 and £729 respectively.

New winter charters to Mexico have reduced prices to £569 for two weeks (in the simple but well placed two-star Playa Los Arcos Hotel in Puerto Vallarta). Good news also is the choice of regional airports; it will be possible to fly to Florida from 12 UK airports, including Aberdeen.

Easter feasts

ANYONE who has missed out on a traditional Easter holiday can sample the Greek Orthodox version which falls on April 25-27 this year. A highlight of the Cypriot calendar, where it is known as *Lambri*, villages take to the countryside for picnics and feasting during week-long celebrations. Argo Holidays (0171-331 7070) offers renovated old stone village houses in western Cyprus near the Adriatic wilderness of the Akamas peninsula and Paphos forests, from £365 per week, including flights and car hire. Villas with pools are also available.

Bird tracking

AN ESCORTED 22-day "Ultimate Ornithological Tour" based on Irian Jaya, the remote western half of New Guinea, a land of primary rainforests, uninhabited islands and isolated Stone Age tribes, is an adventurous offering from Reef and Rainforest Tours (01803 866965). Inspired by Sir David Attenborough's *Attenborough in Paradise* television programme, there will be nocturnal jungle walks and dawn patrols in search of birds of paradise and the other 650 or so species that can be found here, as well as 150 mammal species, 580 amphibians and reptiles, and 9,000 plants — including 2,700 orchids. Price, excluding international flights, is £1,880. Part of the proceeds goes towards helping local village communities.

On another natural history holiday, Quentin Bloxham, director of Jersey Zoo, leads "The Aye-Aye and I Tour" following in the footsteps of the late Gerald Durrell in Madagascar. This tour costs from £1,894.

Hide away

FAR from the madding crowds in the popular Turkish resorts, Savile Row Tours (0171-625 3001) has opened its own exclusive hideaway, Club Savile, at the head of the Kas peninsula. The self-catering accommodation in penthouses and apartments comes with luxuries rare in Turkey — television, bathrobes, hampers and dishwashers, and an à la carte restaurant. Such pampering does not come cheap: one week costs £439-£569, including flights and two full-day excursions, though the two-week prices, £539-£669, make more financial sense.

Timeless treats

THE FIRM Simply Tuscany & Umbria (0181-995 8277) has unusual farmhouses, villas and hotels all within easy reach of Florence or Siena, San Gimignano or Assisi. In the Antico Borgo San Lorenzo, off the medieval Via Francigena (Mass is still said in the 10th-century Romanesque chapel every week), stone farmhouses have been converted into cottages and apartments round a pool. A week's self-catering costs from £395 per person, including flights and car hire.

A 3rd-century BC temple and Roman well were uncovered during renovations to a ruined 18th-century farmhouse near Assisi, now the family-run Santa Maria degli Ancillotti country hotel which offers traditional food, panoramic views and peace and quiet. Mountain bikes are provided to explore the nature reserve of Monte Subasio, Assisi or Perugia. The price is £672 for a week's B&B with flights and car hire.

On the ball

KEEN golfers heading for Ireland may find it profitable to acquire the *Golf Directory*, from Open Fairways, which offers 250 complimentary green fees at more than 85 of Ireland's top courses, as well as savings of 50 per cent on accommodation at 40 hotels, and a guide to B&B accommodation. At the Portmarnock Links, for example, where green fees are £45 a round, four can play for the price of two, a saving of £90. Using the directory, you can play more than 40 courses for £10 or less. The *Golf Directory* costs £52.50; further information from Open Fairways (01247 471277).

Maintaining those high Cs

Charm, calm and cuisine are top of the list for approved Relais & Châteaux hotels

The hotel chain Relais & Châteaux is on the move. This group of luxury hotels, converted castles and abbeys, and exquisite little inns has a guide which has now become wholly international, with editions in English, French and German. Until last year, British travellers had to steer their way among the pages and paragraphs in French to find the information in their own language (though some will no doubt regret not having the racy French version to read as well).

The guide is in a smaller format and is easier to carry, and Relais & Châteaux has reduced the number of symbols indicating the different kinds of hotel from five to three. Now there is a blue fleur-de-lys indicating a fine, comfortable house in the distinctively personal Relais & Châteaux style, a gold fleur-de-lys indicating "the refined comfort of a superb residence", and a purple one for the 15 de luxe hotels that belong to the chain. The chef-with-his-hat, for outstanding restaurants and hotel dining rooms, survives unchanged.

This year there are 431 hotels and restaurants in 45 countries in the guide. It is not easy for a hotel to get in. The chain requires new members to match up to its standards in all the five Cs: character, courtesy, calm, charm and cuisine.

Twenty-one new members qualified for the 1997 guide. They include the Auberge et Clos des Cimes at St Bonnet-le-Froid, whose bedrooms look out over the Cévennes, and where you are promised an outstanding bottle of Crozes-Hermitage with dinner.

For the first time there is an entry from Zimbabwe: the Imba Matombo Lodge in the hills near Harare. But the new list is in general westward-looking, with three hotels and one restaurant (the Aureole in New York) from the United States and entries from Mexico, Colombia and Ecuador.

The chain has also gone on to the Internet, and has an e-mail address. Special packages are available at some hotels, with a fixed price for a double room, dinner and breakfast. Readers of *The Times* have enthusiastically taken up previous such offers: some like to have a luxurious night at a hotel on their way elsewhere, and these offers will especially suit them.

New marketing methods often mean changes in the product being sold — maybe for the worse. Will this happen to Relais & Châteaux?

The answer is that it is unlikely, because all its hotels and restaurants are privately owned, with idiosyncratic proprietors who like to go their own way. Nothing is asked of them except that they keep up their standards and their individuality. The guide shows they are doing just that.

DERWENT MAY

- *Internet: http://www.integra.fr/relaischateaux. E-mail address: resarc@relaischateaux.fr.*
For further information: 7 Cork Street, London W1X 2AB (0171-287 0987).

Imba Matombo Lodge, set in the hills near Harare, Zimbabwe

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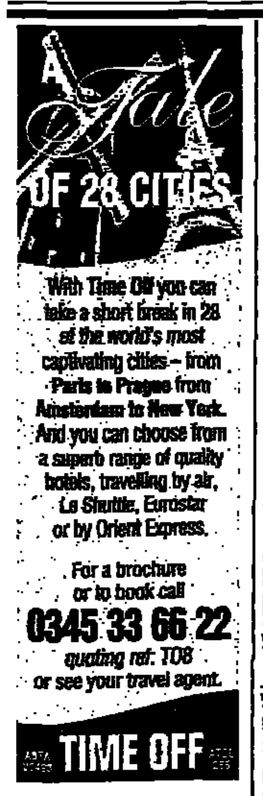
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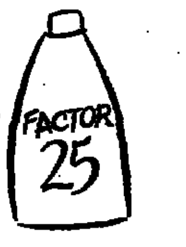
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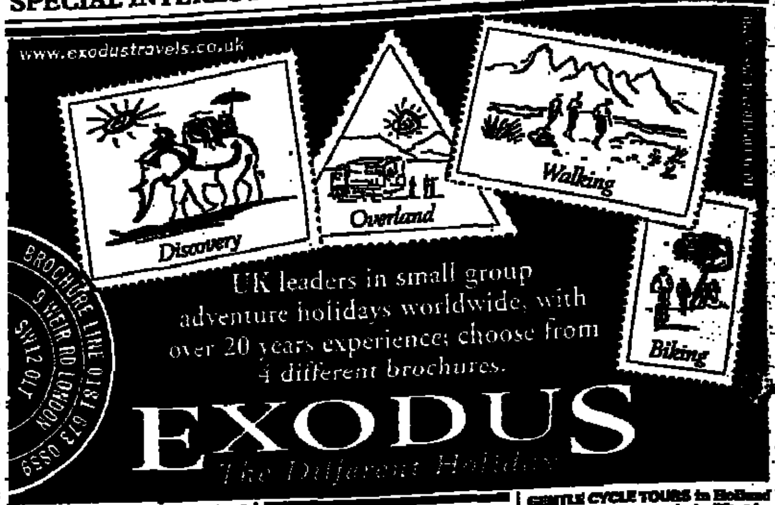
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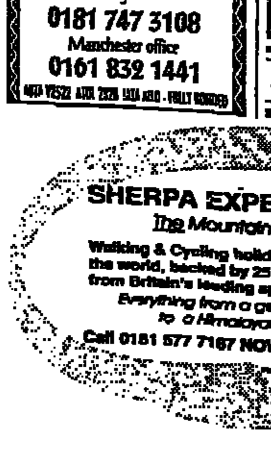
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ص١٥٢ من الاصل

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

GARRY Kasparov's extraordinary results in the Las Palmas and Linares tournaments, where Karpov, Kramnik, Anand, Polgar and Topalov all fell under his scythe, are likely to catapult him to an unprecedentedly high international rating of 2820. Of the leading grandmasters, only Ivanchuk held his own with the champion, drawing one, losing one, but also winning one in their three games.

Whatever the younger generation did, the cynosure of all eyes was bound to be his clash against his supreme rival Anatoly Karpov. The two had not played since early 1994, when Karpov achieved the greatest tournament triumph of his career, winning the Linares competition by a massive margin. Both men lay claim to the World Championship; together or separately they have dominated the chess landscape for more than two decades, and Kasparov, in particular, was out for revenge.

White: Kasparov; Black: Karpov
Las Palmas, 1996
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6
3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Qc2

One of Kasparov's favourites against the Nimzo-Indian, though he also defeated Kramnik at Linares with 4 e3. The point of the text is to acquire the bishop pair, without allowing his pawn structure to be damaged.

4 ... 0-0 5 a3 Bxc3+
6 Qxc3 b6 7 Bg5 Bb7
8 e3 d6 9 f3 Nbd7
10 Nh3 c5 11 dxc5 bxc5
12 Be2 Qb6 13 0-0 d5

The position is in dynamic equilibrium. White has, indeed, gained the bishop pair, but Black is well entrenched in the centre.

14 Rad1 Bc6 15 Nf2 h6
16 Bh4 Ba4 17 Rd2 Bb3
18 Ng4

An unconventional idea which weakens his own pawn structure. Nevertheless, the open f-file which soon arises, does grant White significant attacking chances.

18 ... Nxg4 19 fxg4 Rab8
20 g5 hxg5 21 Bxg5 Rb7
22 Be7 Re8 23 Bh4 Nf8
24 Bg3 Rd8 25 Bh4 Rdd7

Here Black could have repeated moves with 25 ... Rd8, when White may have nothing better than 26 Bg3 with a likely draw. In the heat of battle, Karpov tries for more.

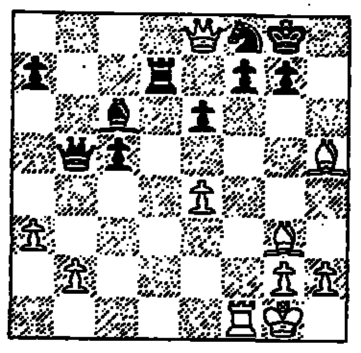
26 cxd5 Rxd5 27 e4 Rxd2
28 Qxd2 Ba4 29 Bh5 Be8

A more combative choice is 29 ... g6, which obliges White to sacrifice material for unclear compensation after either: (a) 30 Bf6 Nh7 31 e5 Qxb2 32 Qd8+ Nf8 33 Bf3 Rd7; or (b) 30 Qh6 Nh7 31 e5 Qxb2 32 Bxg6 fxg6 33 Qxg6+ Rg7 34 Qxe6+ Kh8.

30 Bf2 Qb5 31 Qd8 Bc6
32 Bg3 Rd7

Karpov has completely missed his footing. It would have been better at move 30 to capture White pawn on b2. Now he falls under a heavy attack.

33 Qe8 — with the threat of Bd6.



33 ... Qxf1+. A convoluted way of trading queens, but if 33 ... Qb7, to lend added protection to the f7-pawn, then 34 Bd6 Rxd6 35 Bxf7+ still wins for White.

34 Kxf1 Rd1+ 35 Bxd1 Bxe8
36 Bf2 Bb5+ 37 Be2 Bxe2+
38 Kxe2 Nd7

Although Black has escaped into an endgame, the weakness of his queenside pawns, lying in the direct path of White's dangerous bishop, remains an insuperable obstacle.

39 Kd3 a6 40 Bg1 f5
41 exf5 exf5 42 Kc4 Ne5+
43 Kxc5 Nd3+ 44 Kb6

Black resigns.

WINNING MOVE

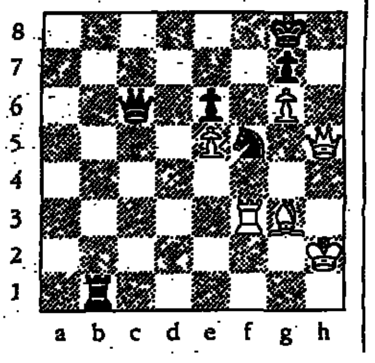
By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Dementiev - Dzindzihashvili, USSR 1972. The queen and knight are well known as a powerful attacking force as the two pieces complement each other very well. How did Black demonstrate this here?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Qh6

Last week's winner: D. Burnett, Billingham, Cleveland



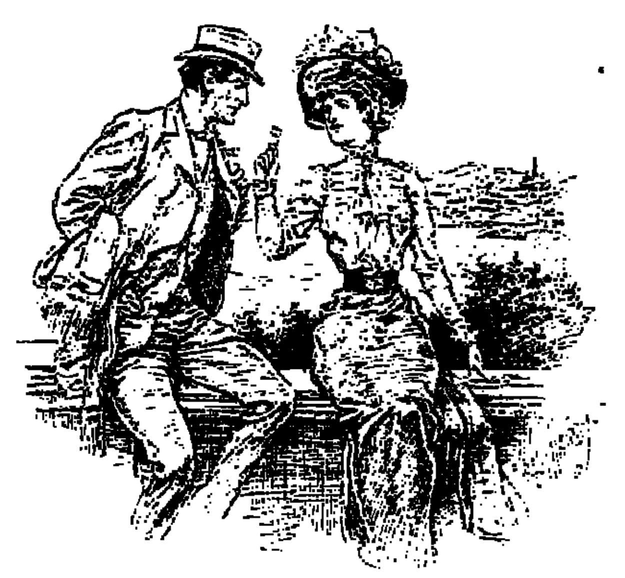
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption 42, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, March 12.



"Clone forty of him will you, I need a new fur coat"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by P. Cunningham of Southend-on-Sea, Essex

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

BRETWALDA
a. East Anglia
b. An Overlord
c. The Old Wessex Forest

PENDRAGON
a. Warlord
b. A swan-dragon monster
c. The fifth actor

GOLIARDS
a. Clowns
b. High boots
c. Lincolnshire dykes

PAVAN
a. A sweet bun
b. A skylight
c. A dance

Answers on page 22

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

DISCARDING is one of most difficult parts of the game. There are many considerations, but above all you must have a plan. One essential is to count the declarer's certain tricks; then if you see he can make the contract if he has a particular card, assume your partner has that card. Here is an example:

Dlr North Love all — Rubber bridge

North: ♠K108 ♥A109874 ♦K97 ♣3
West: ♠AJ764 ♥K53 ♦862 ♣Q8

W	N	E	S
-	1H	Pass	2C
Pass	2H	Pass	3NT
All Pass			

Contract: 3NT by South.
Lead: the six of spades

Dummy's ten of spades wins the first trick, East playing the two. At trick two declarer plays a club to his jack, and your queen. It seems the best chance is that your partner has three spades, so you continue with the four of spades. Your partner follows with the three, declarer wins in hand with the queen and runs his clubs. He turns out to have started with A K J 10 4 2. You have to discard four times. What do you keep?

This is how you should think. Declarer has two tricks in spades and five in clubs, along with the ace of hearts. If he has the ace of diamonds he is home, so you must place your partner with that card. You can't afford to throw a spade, else declarer may set up a trick in diamonds, with the defence not being able to cash enough spades to set the contract.

Hence your last five cards should be three spades, the king of hearts and one diamond. You have to hope your partner has the queen of hearts. That is the successful defence — the full deal:

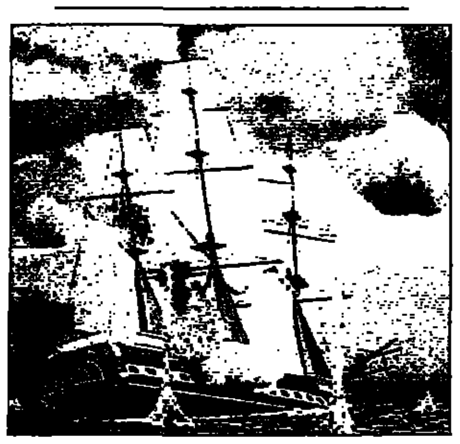
North: ♠K108 ♥A109874 ♦K97 ♣3
West: ♠AJ764 ♥K53 ♦862 ♣Q8
East: ♠932 ♥Q6 ♦A543 ♣9765
South: ♠Q5 ♥J2 ♦QJ10 ♣AKJ1042

Notice that East should be thinking in a similar way. When West shows out on the third club East can tell that declarer has eight tricks, and so to beat the contract East has to assume West has the ace of spades and the king of hearts. Thus East should keep two hearts and a spade along with Ax of diamonds as his last five cards.

Some duplicate players sitting West would tell you after the hand "I knew that my partner had the ace of diamonds because his three on the second round of spades was suit-preference". That is thinking on the wrong lines — the reason West assumes East has the ace of diamonds is that otherwise declarer would be making his contract. East's signalling is irrelevant.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott



Cannon fire from swashbuckling pirates rules the waves in Admiral Sea Battles

PREPARE to buckle your swash *for* **Admiral Sea Battles**, *conjuring* up a pirates of the Caribbean ride with crews in frilly blousons and the odd black eye patch. Taking control of the open seas needs strategy and cunning as much as the brute force of an Armada made up of triple-decked battleships, galleons, galleys and paddle steamers.

Playing against the computer in various devilishly hard missions or head-to-head against human opponents — over networks or, thankfully, on a single PC — you start with a limited budget to buy your formidable flotilla, from a choice of 11 sailing vessels. Smaller boats travel furthest but crumple more quickly under attack. Ports, where ships are made, and forts can also be built strategically along coastlines to improve your odds though neither comes cheap.

Gameplay is turn-based between you and opponents. Orders are issued to each of your units, telling them where to move or whether to pull alongside enemy ships and fire broadsides or, if your crew are not on their last sea-legs, attempt to board. The latter, when successful, adds that vessel to your own fleet. Each ship can take only so much flack before sinking, though if *they manage to limp back to a* home port they are fully repaired. Weather also plays its part in the ensuing battles as sudden storms whip up to blow vessels wildly off-course, throwing best laid schemes into disarray.

The large expanse of sea may be boring to look at for hours on end, but it is regularly broken up by dolphins and flicking whale tails. Ships make their moves with pleasing whooshes in calm seas, while satisfying cannon-fire rumbles rule the waves as fleets become embroiled in battle. Seeing ships sink is the highlight in this subtle war sim, from 21st Century on PC CD-Rom.

Next up, due by the early summer, will be **Admiral Ancient Ships**. This title looks to the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome for inspiration, offering single-sail boats from that era. But you'll also have to fend off creatures from ancient myths.

Admittedly, the style of warmongering in Admiral Sea Battles is nothing new as you command an array of units to eventually erode your foes' defences, but for a change the action brings to mind dashing heroes like Errol Flynn rather than the routine mindless might of a Sylvester Stallone.

The SAS seem to be playing the anonymous troops in **Red Alert**, the glossy sequel to Command and Conquer and perhaps the best war sim so far. Played out to a soundtrack of your men continually confirming receipt of your *instructions over field radio*, the game looks smart and plays very smoothly.

For more sea-faring exploits, **Hasbro's Battleship** is a makeover of the pen and paper game of the same name. If you want loud explosions and dramatic video clips mixed up with your guess-work, this could be for you. In the same PC CD-Rom series, Hasbro also translated the classic world conquest board-game Risk but I find its appeal unsatisfying.

This all-singing, all-dancing version lets you play other human opponents over local networks or the internet. However, **Hasbro's Risk** mysteriously omits the option allowing two humans to compete against each other on one computer. For years there have been plenty of tiny shareware Risk titles, such as **Egarisk**, which though basic mirrored the classic gameplay sufficiently well in versions which allowed two, three or more humans to battle it out on the same machine. It's a sad omission by Hasbro, since many households only have one computer and few board games lend themselves so *well to noisy and prolonged family* fun than Risk. Hopefully this simple exclusion will be fixed in later versions.

In the meantime, if anyone has come across a particularly competent version of Risk which does accommodate two or more players on a single machine, I'd love to hear from you.

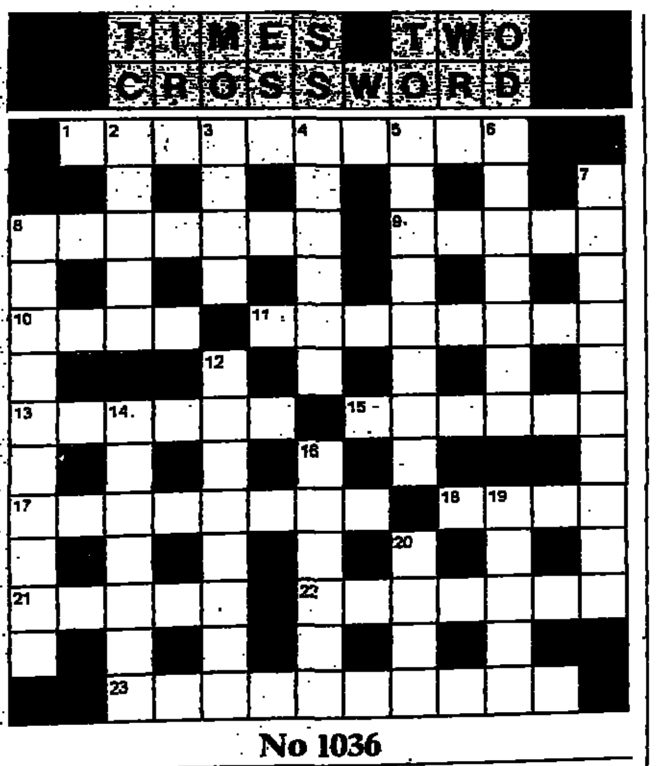
The next appeal is on behalf of Mrs J. Derwent of Daventry, Northants, who writes to say she is desperate to buy a hand-held Scrabble game, called **Monty Plays Scrabble**.

Combing the stands at the Toy and Hobby Fair recently didn't produce the answer; although I stumbled on plenty of portable parlour games — poker, one-armed bandits and so on — I drew the blank on finding a small Scrabble machine.

So, it's over to you. Do you know where Mrs Derwent can get Monty Plays Scrabble, or something similar? All letters will be forwarded.

This week's Top Tip, winning him a Microsoft title, comes from Alex Butterworth, of Guildford, Surrey: "Surround your computer with a moat, to protect it against theft by soluble burglars."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1036

ACROSS
1 Tiny bit (of learning) (10)
8 Siegfried —, war poet (7)
9 Deeper; ring on target (5)
10 Lime/clay fertiliser (4)
11 How the unprepared are caught (2,3,3)
13 John —; — Beardsley (6)
15 Indelible skin picture (6)
17 Ceremonious Catholic service (4,4)
18 Amongst (4)
21 Char (5)
22 Diplomat; sort of case (7)
23 Methodical (10)

DOWN
2 Tightwad (5)
3 Stepped; "generations have —" *(Hopkins)* (4)
4 Pacific warming current (2,4)
5 One from Emerald Isle (8)
6 Firing of bullet (7)
7 Barset bishop's wife *(Trollope)* (3,7)
8 Share (one's) feelings (10)
12 With no visible join (8)
14 Past misdemeanours (forgiven) (7)
16 Condition; lands (6)
19 Speed of sound (4,1)
20 Sicilian volcano (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1035

ACROSS: 4 Abbot 7 Hot water 8 Dice 9 Shrug off 10 Heckle 13 Kettle 14 Moment 15 Studio 18 Reassure 19 Soda 20 Evensong 21 Liner

DOWN: 1 Thrive 2 Streak 3 Hassle 4 Argument 5 Besotted 6 Trifle 11 Campaign 12 Landseer 14 Morsel 15 Sterne 16 Upshot 17 Indigo

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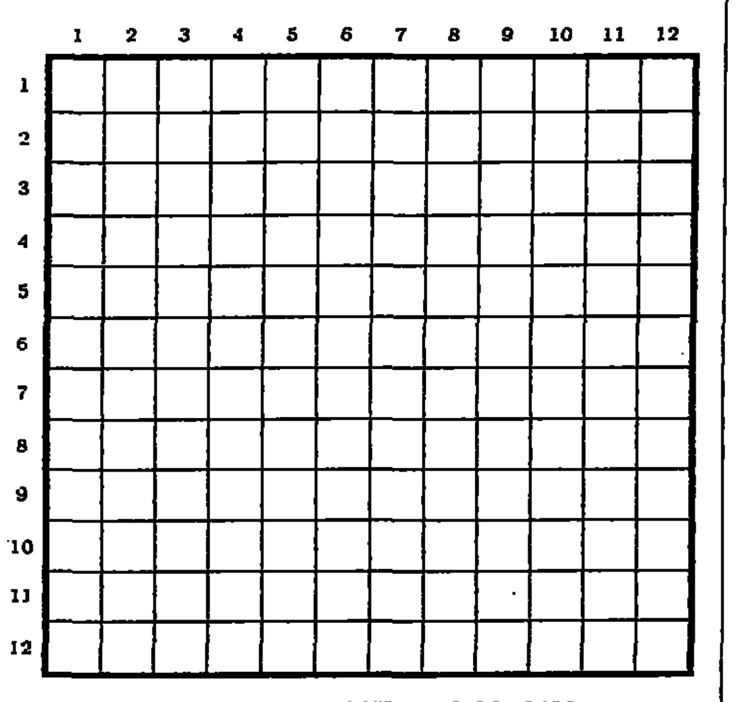
THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3400: Wheeler-dealing by Sabre

EACH ROW and column comprises two words, entered cyclically, starting at an arbitrary square. All clues are normal, but three across and three down answers are thematically related, and must be replaced by six others of the same type before entry into the diagram. There are no unchecked letters; the solver need not enter bars.

ACROSS
1 Radical dignitary loves embraces
Senses an unusual reason
2 Fish found in Baronet's bathroom fixture
Branchy neuromas lopped off
3 Tight Greek character backs out of corset
Loses all hope here, as horse is in last place
4 Handy quantities — of dates?
It stops dog biting Liberal
5 Foster-mother confronted young monkey!
Remove old badger with tail docked
6 Man on drugs, topless, came into local
Sailor the French see in front gondola
7 Like a crazy king — more cracked?
Tray catching hot ash, for example
8 Rope twisting round whale endlessly
Grampian bears heard in mist
9 Summer activity starts to confuse one riding to 'ounds
Showing doubt about the state of Woonsocket's oracle?
10 Large bill apropos Terry's boxing
Carp that started flatfish
11 English tan badly? Not in these scant swimming trunks
One faithful cut pastor over bribe
12 Itinerants are taken in by anglers
Get used to wrong type of pen being mislaid

DOWN
1 Cockney agitator, one working on US sub!
Euro MP, coming on left wing, put on committee
2 Dales, mossy in middle, maybe
Coal, I see, ruined cotton cloth
3 Crush recipe: plum cooked with hint of elderberry
Impurities not seen in Diana
4 Shame lecturer to make excel in studies
St Andrew's turf, dishearteningly run wild
5 Overcast in west with no sign of it turning
Sidecar, for example, set upright on rear end
6 Company holds fantastic dance
One in tree climbs a certain way
7 Word-play champion — bishop?
Physician, oddly, earns silver money
8 An erratic drunk causes delay
Hairy creature swallowed by grandson
9 One learned Valium must be re-ordered
Digs for coal, setting TNT with grunts
10 One considering eating red-headed fish
Topless hussy kissing cardinal: allowed in Fife
11 Spies tailless whale, one venerated by Romans
Stranger spins about megalopolis
12 It's a silver coin
Hot air and phosphorus comprising bun preservative?



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S	H	H	A	N	O	I	S	R	H	O	M	B
T	E	A	S	E	S	C	E	N	E	S	B	Y
A	N	A	T	O	M	I	S	E	V	E	A	L
M	I	R	K	A	P	P	R	O	B	A	T	E
R	L	A	A	N	N	A	L	N	E	S	T	A
O	L	E	I	N	A	T	O	D	T	Y	L	N
M	E	S	T	I	Z	O	C	O	O	K	E	D
E	R	O	C	K	E	R	I	O	N	I	T	E
O	R	P	H	E	U	S	C	L	Y	D	E	R

Solution to No 3397
Rueoc ed Ire by Le Gallois

Special clues comprise the "heart" (one or two letters) of each word in sequence leading to (A) Hero/Leander (28) (B) Joan/Darby (10) (C) Juliet/Romeo (32) (D) Iseult/Tristam (1) (E) Bonnie/Clyde (47) (F) Helen/Paris (2) (G) Eurydice/Orpheus (46) (H) Heloise/Abelard (6) Message at heart of puzzle in shape of heart, hence quote (and title). But O heart heart heart — Whitman *(Penguin Dictionary of Quotations)*.

Misprints
Across (17) Awed (14) Jest (21) Card (26) Meat (34) Years (37) Miss (38) Eser (44) Stone.
Down (4) Part (5) Land (6) Spend (8) Kent (9) Pipe (12) Poem (13) Card (16) Cord (19) Fog (24) Lamp (43) Box.

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The five runners-up are M. Taylor of Rugeley, Staffordshire; L. Mestel of Lewes, Sussex; A. Taggart of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; M. Cluley of Gillingham, Dorset; and J. Mackintosh of West Wickham, Kent.

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